

A HISTORY OF THE JEWS **In Christian Spain**

YITZHAK BAER

Vol. II

A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN CHRISTIAN SPAIN

II

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CHRISTIAN SPAIN

Volume

II

from the Fourteenth Century to the Expulsion

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*To the memory of my father and teacher,
Joseph ben-Samuel Baer (may his memory be for a blessing),
and of the Jewish community of Halberstadt
which wicked hands destroyed
along with the other communities of Germany and Poland,
their teachers and pious men and women.*

The translation of this volume is the work of several hands. Miss Lotte Levensohn prepared a draft, except for the quotations from the medieval authors. Mr. Hillel Halkin reviewed the original draft and completed the translation. Dr. Shulamith Nardi rendered into English several of the longer quotations in verse. Mrs. Hertzal Fishman prepared the index which appears in this volume.

We are also grateful to Dr. Haim Beinart of the Hebrew University for having read the translation and for having prepared the map that serves as the endsheets.

The Jewish Publication Society

FROM THE PREFACE TO

<< Chapter >>

THE FIRST EDITION[Home](#) | [TOC](#) | [Index](#)

A few words are called for to describe the origin and aim of this book. The documentary foundation for it was laid a long time ago when I carried on research in the Spanish archives, which had been made possible by the Academy for Jewish Knowledge in Berlin. I especially want to mention with gratitude the late Eugen Taeubler, who headed the research section of the Academy, and Julius Guttmann who followed him. Both these scholars gave me great encouragement at the time when I worked for the Academy. The two volumes of documentary source material, which are frequently referred to in the present work, were published in 1929 and 1936, the second with the generous aid of the late Sh. Z. Schocken.

The two volumes of source material contain not only detailed bibliographical information, but also expressions of appreciation of the Spanish scholars who brought to light, out of the treasures which lay hidden in their archives, a great many documents that reveal the past of the segment of the Jewish people which found its home in Spain. Such research in those archives has not ceased. Even in the troubled times that followed, Christian Spanish scholars friendly to the Jews established the periodical, *Sefarad*, which is dedicated to Jewish scholarship in general and to Jewish history and culture in Spain in particular—it is a scholarly journal unequalled in any other land.

A German manuscript of my book was ready in 1938, and I considered having it published at that time. Early in 1942, the late B. Katzenelson, urged by my friend Ben-Zion Dinaburg (Dinur), suggested publication in Hebrew by the firm Am Oved. It fell to me to recast the book and to bring it back to the language in which Jewish scholarship had had its origin.

A number of the chapters of this book had been drafted while I was still in Europe, but it was not given me to complete the work until I settled in the Land of Israel. Living contact with the center of Jewish life and history, and the close proximity of good friends who were themselves in even closer touch than I with the sources of Jewish life, made this possible. I did not permit myself to limit my work to the documentary material which I had gathered, but considered it my duty to enlarge it by including any number of problems and trends in the spiritual life of the Jewish people. These, too, had to be considered historical factors intimately tied in with the political and social. Yet, like any historian worthy of the name, I stuck to the subject in hand—to one of the most significant periods in the history of the Jewish people—seeking to clarify to myself certain basic problems that were part of our peopled past and affected its material and spiritual future. I can only hope that this book will aid others whose spirit may want to follow the like path.

(Completed during the period of mourning for my mother who passed away in Jerusalem on the 14th of Shevat, 5705 [1945]).

Yitzhak Baer

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

[<< Chapter >>](#)

[Home](#) | [TOC](#) | [Index](#)

This English edition of my book, “The History of the Jews in Christian Spain,” is based on the second Hebrew edition which appeared in 1959. But in actual fact, this edition in English should be considered a third edition of the book. While the fundamental ideas underlying the book are no different from those of the original manuscript which was ready in 1938, they have been verified and fortified by checking and evaluating the new material and the continuing research which has been made available in a constant stream.

My deep feelings of gratitude to Spain, its scholars and its scholarly institutions were expressed in the prefaces to my two volumes of documentary material. The many months which I spent in the Spanish archives have remained imbedded in my heart as periods of happiness and profound spiritual satisfaction.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to The Jewish Publication Society of America, and to Drs. Louis Schoffman, Haim Beinart, Hillel Halkin, and Shulamith Nardi, all of whom helped in the preparation of this English edition.

Yitzhak Baer

Jerusalem

8 Tishri, 5726 (October 4, 1965)

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Foreword | vii |
| From the Preface to the First Edition | ix |
| Preface to the English Edition | xi |
| VIII The Era of Decline in Aragon | 1 |
| IX Reorganization and Social Conflict Within the Aljamas | 35 |
| X Destruction and Conversions (1391–1412) | 95 |
| XI The Disputation at Tortosa (1413–1414) | 170 |
| XII The Jews and the Converse Problem | 244 |
| XIII The Catholic Monarchs | 300 |
| XIV The Inquisition | 324 |
| XV The Expulsion | 424 |
| Appendix | 444 |
| Notes | 459 |
| Index..... | 515 |

A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN CHRISTIAN SPAIN

THE ERA OF DECLINE IN ARAGON

THE REIGN OF JAMES II

The history of the Jews of Aragon moves in quieter and more modest paths than that of their brethren in Castile. No longer were there in Aragon powerful Jewish courtiers able to hold their own against Christian rivals; overt Jewish influence in high politics was therefore automatically ruled out. The aftermath of the political system of the Reconquest period was cleared away much earlier in Aragon than in Castile. When the policy of conquest and colonization was abandoned and Jews were barred from public office, the result was a decline in their political and economic status; and it was only in the latter half of the fourteenth century that they began

to rise to the cultural level that restored to the Jewry of Aragon its special place in Jewish history. The numerous documents preserved in the archives make it possible to describe this period more fully than any other in the history of the Jews in the Middle Ages.

James II (1291–1327) laid down a Jewish policy that was followed for about a century.¹ In general, James' object was to protect the Jews and to confirm their privileges in so far as those privileges were not incompatible with the principles of the Christian Church and State. He safeguarded the economic and legal privileges of the Jews, aided them in developing their communal institutions, and, like his predecessors and successors, intervened in their internal affairs for both good and ill.

In the year 1302, at the request of the aljamas, the king ordered the hanging of a Jewish informer.² No details of the incident are available. It may have been hushed up deliberately in view of the nature of the case and of the character of the king. A similar incident occurred in the community of Valencia where, in the course of a protracted controversy, which began in the reign of Alfonso III and ended about 1300, one party to the dispute brought charges of denunciation against the other. The heads of the aljama imprisoned the man as an alleged informer, and held a judicial inquiry in which the judge (*justicia*) of Valencia took part. Without consulting the rabbis of Aragon, the Valencian leaders turned to the Jewish scholars of Toledo for a ruling in the case. The latter refused on the ground that the matter did not come within their competence. When, as a last resort, the Valencian leaders applied to R. Solomon ibn Adret, he declared that he would express no opinion unless the king ordered him to do so. Instructions to R. Solomon were actually prepared in the royal chancery, but were never sent to their destination. The matter seems to have been dropped intentionally.³ More detailed data on the criminal jurisdiction enjoyed by the

Jews in the reign of James II are not available. The lack of such data is undoubtedly not accidental. At that time there were no longer in Aragon Jewish bailiffs (*bailles*), men of action who had previously protected the Jewish community against informers; and, after the death of Ibn Adret, there were no scholars who, by virtue of their halakhic and moral authority, could have assumed the responsibility of imposing death sentences. Possibly, too, the wary ruler of Aragon may have been prompted by political considerations not to grant the Jews a measure of judicial authority that might have been deemed contrary to the Christian conscience. In other respects, the king acknowledged the validity of the Jewish law and, like his predecessors, he submitted difficult cases to distinguished Jewish scholars for their decision.

The taxes in the reign of James II were as burdensome as at all other times. Though the king had assured various communities that harsh measures, such as imprisonment, would not be employed in collecting the taxes, there was more than one instance of ruthless procedure. A letter from the *aljama* of Saragossa to the keeper of the royal seal has come down to us in which the *adelantados* (administrative officers) complain of the conduct of some of the king's officers in arresting about seventy Jews for non-payment of taxes. The prisoners had been released only at a late hour on a Friday afternoon and then had to hurry to the city so as to obtain from the moneylenders the amount required for payment of the taxes to the royal treasury on the following Monday morning. One of the *adelantados*, who was on friendly terms with the keeper of the royal seal, complained that he had been arrested in his own home and treated shamefully though his son lay seriously ill at the time.⁴

Then, as always, money was extorted from the Jews on the pretext that they had violated the usury laws. James II confirmed the usury laws enacted by his predecessors in 1292, 1301, 1307, 1311 and 1315 at various sessions of the Cortes,

and added harsh new ordinances of his own against various evasions of the law. In 1298 and again in 1300, the king ordered extensive inquiries to be made into alleged Jewish violations of the usury laws, and entrusted the conduct of the inquiries to the clergy—a fact which in itself indicates the source of the accusations. The king finally closed the matter by imposing a heavy fine as a compromise penalty upon all the Jewish communities of Aragon. And so the case ended, with the king giving assurances that no such investigations would be made in the future.⁵

Such a policy could not but go beyond the limits of the *status quo*. Only in the districts near the southern border of the Kingdom of Valencia—at Elche, Alicante and Murcia, where the interests of Castile and Aragon clashed—were traces still evident of a colonization policy favorable to the Jews.⁶ James II reconfirmed the rights to tax-exemption of a Jewish tax farmer in Murcia, a native of Castile, which had originally been granted him by Alfonso X. To Don Isaac ibn Wakar, the famous Jewish physician of Don Juan Manuel, the king granted lands taken from the Moslems of Elche. But there is no trace here of the extensive judicial and administrative powers which at that time the Castilian kings still granted their Jewish *almoxarifes* (court officials). In certain cases, James II confiscated the property of certain Jews from what was once Castile on the pretext that they were “rebels,” that is, they were still pro-Castilian, in the districts handed over to the Aragonese.

Though the documentary materials relating to these conquered provinces is scanty, they suffice to show that the pro-Jewish policy was renounced. In Elche, until 1308, the office and tax records relating to the Moslems were kept by a Jewish notary; then a Christian was appointed in his stead. The province of Murcia was restored to Castile, and the other southern provinces adjacent to the border were neglected by the Aragonese central administration. The Jews there were

not interested in having special privileges. By and large, they kept away from any connection with high politics. Here and there they still had some share in the farming of local taxes, but no political significance was attached to such activities. Reference has already been made to the end of the political career of the Portella family which occurred at this period.⁷ More important functions were assigned to a few Jewish interpreters, who were sent on diplomatic missions to the Moslem princes of Granada and Morocco. Later, James II preferred to employ Christians for such duties. In a letter to the keeper of the royal seal, which happens to have been preserved, a certain Bahiel, perhaps an offspring of the famous Bachie Alconstantini, offers his services as a physician and interpreter to the son of James II, who was then journeying to Morocco, and mentions the fact that he had served in a similar capacity twenty-five years earlier. It is not known whether the royal family considered this application. An order dating from the early years of James II's reign calls for the appointment of a Jew to draft Arabic documents in the royal chancery. In later years no such appointments were made. There were fewer negotiations with the Moslems, and there was no further need of the services of the Jews.⁸

On the other hand, beginning with the reign of James II, personal relations between the royal family and the Jewish scholars became more intimate. A number of Jewish physicians are mentioned as holding permanent appointments in the royal household or as having been called on special occasions to court or to a station on a royal journey. Letters written personally by the king and his sons and daughters expressing gratitude and appreciation to their Jewish physicians are still extant. Similar letters were written by Christian burghers. From Barcelona, for example, a letter came to the queen appealing to her to prevent Benveniste Izmel, "the best physician in these parts," from leaving the city. The municipality of Saragossa testified to the devoted and constant care

given day and night to the sick of the city by a Jewish physician, R. Solomon ibn Jacob. The king showed his appreciation of the labors of R. Solomon ibn Jacob and other Jewish physicians by exempting them from certain civic duties, such as accepting appointments, giving guarantees for the payment of communal taxes, wearing “Jewish” clothing, and the like. James II, moreover, invited Jewish scholars to carry out literary and scientific assignments at his court. He did not do this in a systematic fashion, like Alfonso X of Castile in his day, or on the same scale as Pedro IV of Aragon at a later date. But the promotion of science had already begun to have an effect on the relations of the kings of Aragon with the Jews. Magister Judah of Barcelona, the son of Astrug Bonsenyor who had served as interpreter to James the Conqueror, compiled for the king an anthology in the Catalan language of ethical maxims gleaned from Latin, Arabic and Hebrew literature. Judah Bonsenyor, Vidal Benveniste de Porta of Barcelona and Benveniste ibn Benveniste of Saragossa were instructed to translate Arabic medical books into the Catalan tongue.⁹

RELIGIOUS POLICY AND THE INQUISITION

James II's desire to be a Christian king extended to the Jews as well. Up to the massacres and baptisms of 1391, no king of Aragon tried so hard as he to convert the Jews to Christianity. Indeed, the records show that, during his reign, a number of Jews went over to Christianity. Among the Christians who received permission from the king to preach to the Jews was the famous mystic Ramón Lull.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the king did everything in his power to check the anti-Jewish religious agitation that was spreading among certain groups of the population. In the year 1294, a rumor was circulated in Saragossa that a Christian child had been murdered by Jews, who removed his heart and liver. The municipal authorities engaged a professional diviner to un-

cover the crime. Meanwhile, the Jews scoured the countryside and found the child they were alleged to have killed. Thereupon the king wrote to the municipal authorities of Saragossa in the most scathing terms; their conduct had been highly irregular, they might have caused the destruction of the whole Jewish community, and Christian law banned the use of magic.¹¹ When, that same year, a little Christian girl disappeared from the Aragonese village of Biel and the villagers arrested all the local Jews, the king sent emissaries to investigate the matter on the spot.¹²

James II adhered firmly to the religious policy adopted by James I and Pedro III. In the meantime, however, new factors which aroused religious fanaticism entered into the situation. The Dominican Inquisition exercised stricter watchfulness over the Jews in religious matters. James II was first to lay down the principle, which was honored also by his successors, that the Jews were not subject to the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. Their affairs, including their transgressions in faith, were subject to the jurisdiction of the king; in other words, these were political and not ecclesiastical matters. Such seems to have been the policy actually followed in the first fifteen years of James II's reign. In 1302 three Jewish notables from Barcelona were accused of blasphemy in Alexandria, Egypt. While visiting that city on business, the men were seen in a Greek Christian church where, it was alleged, they blasphemed against the Virgin Mary and raised their hands against her image. When the three Jews returned to Barcelona, the Dominican inquisitor conducted an inquiry. His report to the king was full of doubts, since he had not been able to establish all the facts. The accused were then let off with a fine payable to the royal treasury.¹³ Three years later a Dominican friar of Huesca wrote a letter to the king alleging blasphemous behavior in the village of Biel. A wealthy Jew, asserted the friar, had been strolling with a Christian notary while the church bells were ringing, and had

then referred to Mary and Jesus in blasphemous terms similar to those used in popular Jewish booklets known as “Toledoth Yeshu.” The clergy of Biel had ordered the alleged blasphemer thrown into prison with the intention of trying him; but their intention was frustrated by the intervention of the local royal officials. The king himself ordered an inquiry to be held, and the outcome convinced him that the man was innocent. The Inquisition—apparently—was not permitted to interfere.¹⁴

After the expulsion of the Jews from France, the situation changed. The complex of international political relations in Europe, with which the Jewish policy of various countries was bound up, must be considered at this point. Castile could still follow an independent policy in these matters, but not so for Aragon, which was more closely associated with the pope. On the border of Aragon lay the provinces of Southern France, which were controlled by the cold-blooded, cruel and cunning advisers of Philip IV, a king equally given to avarice and religious bigotry. In Toulouse, the inquisitor Bernard Gui, active since 1307, dedicated separate chapters of his book *Practica inquisitionis haereticarum pravitatis* to the cases of converted Jews (*conversi*) who returned to the Jewish faith, and to Jews who, as *fautores haereticorum*, had encouraged such repenters.¹⁵

Antisemitism gained ground also in Navarre, whose rulers were connected by family ties with the royal house of France. Kinsmen of James II, who sat on the throne of Sicily and of the small Kingdom of Majorca (which embraced the Balearic Islands, Roussillon, and part of Montpellier) listened willingly to some of their Franciscan advisers who belonged to the extremist-spiritualist group which predicted the establishment of “the Spiritual Church” and the conversion of the Jews. One member of that group, Arnaldo de Villanova, a distinguished physician on intimate terms with the king, suggested thoroughgoing reforms to the king and to his brother, the king

of Sicily, and urged that unbelievers should be baptized and Christians segregated from Jews who were unwilling to change their religion.¹⁶ James II could not altogether escape being influenced by such views. For all that, he followed his own bent in practice, and was helped to do so by sensible and moderate officials. First and foremost, he opened the frontiers of his country to the Jews who were expelled from France on July 22, 1306.¹⁷ (The term “opened the frontiers” is here used advisedly; the Kingdom of Aragon had an efficient system of frontier control.) Less than three weeks after the expulsion of the Jews from France, the Jewish community of Barcelona, headed by Ibn Adret, obtained permission for sixty families to settle in their community. This was a considerable number, equal to between one-third and one-fifth of the Barcelona community. Other Jewish communities took similar steps. Aragonese nobles took advantage of the opportunity to ask the king’s permission to admit Jewish refugees to their territories. The friendly attitude of the king may have been prompted solely by economic and fiscal considerations; but certain humanitarian motives also played a part. Several Jewish refugees were permitted to tour the country and to settle in any locality of their choice. Special privileges were granted to physicians in particular, among whom were some very distinguished members of the profession. There was a new influx of Jewish refugees to Aragon after the assaults of the Shepherds and the burning of Jews and lepers in France in 1320 and 1321.

Some of the refugees had been baptized in the early days of the expulsion from France, and now came to Spain resolved to repent and return to Judaism. In this they received every encouragement from the Spanish Jews; but entire communities in Aragon brought trouble upon themselves by such actions. The king himself was in a quandary, because the Inquisition was supposed to make an example of Jews who dared to encourage *conversos* to return to the Jewish fold,

inasmuch as the Church regarded such penitents as recalcitrants (*relapsi*) and heretics. When an incident of this kind occurred early in 1311, the king was still able to deal with it in his own way. Some Jews in Saragossa had denounced members of their own community: they charged that after a certain Jew had been baptized, he was forced to recant by a relative of his; that when a Jewish youth saw his own father on his way to visit a female Moslem slave, he decided to turn Christian, whereupon his father had tried to poison him; and that when a certain Jewish girl became with child by a Christian, her brothers took her outside the city limits and killed her. The king had an inquiry made, and several months later cleared the community of all these charges on the ground that the evidence was insufficient.¹⁸

Soon thereafter, however, the Inquisition began to harass the Jews. The inquisitor of heresy gathered evidence about *conversos* who returned to Judaism (including some refugees from France) and about two German Christians who came to Spain with the intention of being converted to Judaism in Toledo, and found shelter and encouragement in several Jewish communities in Aragon. From the responsa of R. Asher of Castile it appears that *gerim* (proselytes) were still accepted in the 1320's; but there is no certainty that the inquisitor of heresy really had any definite information that the two Germans were circumcised in Toledo. And yet the mere rumor was sufficient to jeopardize the entire Jewish community.¹⁹ On the strength of such a rumor the Jews of Majorca were sentenced in 1315 to have all their property confiscated and to be deprived of their privileges. The sentence was annulled only by a settlement involving the payment of a large fine to the king which left the community in debt for many years. In the trial, as far as is known, the king, the bishop and the Inquisition all intervened and competed with one another. The Jews, for their part, tried to have the case conducted in a proper legal manner with lawyers to plead their

cause and in the presence of government officials. The same kind of rivalry between the religious and the political authorities was manifest in Aragon as well. The king did everything in his power to protect the Jews. When these trials began in 1311, a Jewish notable of Barcelona received a safe-conduct from the king to the effect that he did not come under the jurisdiction of the inquisitors. The indictment included the case of the two circumcised Germans and several cases of penitent *converses*. The archbishop and the inquisitor, Juan Llotger, ordered the property of certain Jews of Tarragona and Montblanch to be confiscated and the men themselves banished from the country for life. The other members of those communities were condemned in 1313 to pay heavy fines. One synagogue in Tarragona was converted into a Christian church and the synagogue in Montblanch was demolished on the pretext that it had been built without a permit. It appears that a converted Jew from Tarragona who repented his deed was sentenced to death. The Montblanch penitent made his escape, only to be burnt at the stake in 1319 in Tudela.

In Lerida, a recanting *converso* from Toulouse (in the south of France) was being sought. The man escaped from Lerida, but was finally taken back to Toulouse (1317), where the inquisitor into whose hands he fell showed no mercy.

More severe penalties were imposed following a new influx of refugees fleeing from persecution in France in 1320 and 1321. The old story of the circumcision of the two Germans was unearthed from the protocols, and to this were added new instances of penitents who were received back to Judaism. The archbishop and the inquisitor re-indicted the Jews of Tarragona and the vicinity. Some fled, while those who stayed behind were forced to pay very large fines. Among the fugitives was Astruc Crespin, to whom R. Kalonymos, author of *Even Bohan*, referred as “gold seven times refined . . . great in the sight of God and men, a fountain of wisdom and

knowledge.” Also among those who fled was a Jew from Vails, a small village near Tarragona, who had given shelter to a repentant *converso*). The man himself was sentenced to death *in absentia*, and his house was ordered to be burned by the public hangman. The king, however, commandeered the house for more useful purposes.

James II was determined that the ecclesiastical judges should not have an altogether free rein. Some time after the trial at Tarragona ended, in September 1323, the king wrote to the inquisitor Bernardus de Podio Certoso expressing his amazement and displeasure over the proceedings. The inquisitor had discussed the trial with the king before it began, but the inquisitor had not, it seems, disclosed to James his full intentions. Next, Bernardus had begun arresting Jews in Lerida. The king was furious that he had not been consulted: “Had you asked our advice,” he wrote to the inquisitor, “the trial would have been conducted with more moderation and decency, and without scandal.” The king went on to point out that while he himself was by no means backward in prosecuting heretics, the inquisitor was encroaching on the rights of the king under pretext of exterminating heresy. The king insisted that in the future he must always be consulted before any action was taken, “And then you will not cause our Jewish communities to be destroyed without reason.”

Nevertheless, the Inquisition did not restrict its activities to Catalonia, but extended them to Aragon as well. In 1324 the inquisitors went to Calatayud.²⁰ There an apostate, who had changed his religion four times, informed to the Inquisition and extorted large sums from the Jews by threats of denunciation. The Jews of Calatayud then decided that in the future all costs of defending individual Jews who were tried by the Inquisition should be borne by the community as a whole. The king wrote to the inquisitor in Calatayud on February 26, 1325: as it was reported, he (the inquisitor) had

locked up the Jews in narrow cells and ordered them to be tortured in every possible way—all this in violation of canonical law.

In consideration of a vast sum, the king set aside the verdict of the inquisitor and the bishop of Tarragona, ordering the property of a Jew from Calatayud and his daughter to be confiscated (1326) because they had helped a woman *converso* from France to return to Judaism. In other instances, sentences of confiscation were carried into effect. It is interesting to note that a Franciscan monk asked the king for a number of Hebrew books found among the confiscated Jewish property. Among these were the Bible, David Kamhi's *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, and several volumes of the Talmud. His request was granted.

In view of all the "sins" the Jews had been found guilty of, the Inquisition proposed to raze two *midrasses* where penitent *conversos* had been received. The royal officials on the spot warned the king in writing that such an act of reprisal would lead to the complete destruction of the community. Thereupon, the king wrote again to the inquisitor, in December 1326, but in more conciliatory terms than previously. "Since," he declared, "it is our desire to preserve the *aljama* as far as possible, and to the extent that the matter is not evil in the sight of God, we would ask you to consider our wishes insofar as you can do so consistently with your conscience and your duty, and that you refrain for the time being from proclaiming that the *midrasses* are to be demolished." In the end, the king won his point. The ecclesiastical penalties imposed on the community were commuted to very large fines which were paid into the royal treasury (February, 1327).

The wrath of the Inquisition also descended upon the Jewish community of Saragossa. The official records published so far contain no definite data on the subject, but one of the cabalists of Saragossa, whose sermons and visions are re-

corded in his book *Livnath ha-Sapir*, made the following note:

In the year (50)85 (1324/25), in the ninth month, I saw the sanctuary destroyed and the Gentiles taking much spoil of gold and silver, and I cried out in a dream: “And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephania the second priest” [II Kings 25.18]; but God in His mercy set aside His decree and the dissension in the community of Saragossa came to an end. Nevertheless, within ten days judgment was passed against a wise and pious man, R. Joseph of blessed memory; and this was the pious one taken by the captain of the guard, which is to say, by the Angel of Death; he was seized for the sins of his generation; . . . and Zephania, a godly scholar, was seized; and the wife of the scholar R. Isaac died while she was with child; but the decree against the others was set aside by the mercy of God.²¹

The allusion is probably to one of the trials held by the Inquisition. The synagogue seems to have been demolished by order of the inquisitor, and a Jew who encouraged repentant *conversos* to return to Judaism was put to death. The fact that the official records contain no reference whatever to this incident indicates that the king lacked the power to put a stop to the proceedings. The splendid community of Saragossa, like all the Jewish communities that were involved in such trials, was completely ruined. In the year 1335 the Infante Pedro (later Pedro IV) reported to his father, Alfonso IV, on the poor state of the *aljama* of Saragossa. “It is so ruined,” he wrote, “that very little is left.” When the communal property held in the fortress located in the Jewish quarter was examined, nothing was found but a few garments which were worth very little. This situation was probably the result of the communal debts that had been contracted when loans had to be taken in order to pay fines.

THE SHEPHERD'S CRUSADE AND THE LEPERS

Both the general background and the remote cause of the trials held by the Inquisition can be traced to the persecutions of the Jews of France, which later spread to Spain as well. In the year 1320, a popular visionary gathered under his banner a great rabble known as the *Pastorelli* (Shepherds) with the object of a crusade against the Moslems of Granada. After murdering many Jews in southern France, particularly in Toulouse, the Shepherds crossed the Pyrenees into Aragon and wiped out the Jewish communities of Jaca and Montclus. Jews from the nearest localities to the south (Barbastro, Monzon and Lerida) came to bury the dead of Montclus and were accused of destroying the town's bridge and cutting down its trees. The authorities stopped the Shepherds from doing any further harm on the soil of Aragon. James II sent troops to the threatened localities, and his son Alfonso ordered forty of the bandits hanged in the city of Huesca. When the robbers were thrust out of Aragon they turned to neighboring Navarre. There, in Pamplona, the Jews defended themselves against the Shepherds, with the help of a certain knight who was sent for that purpose, and drove them back. The Shepherds abandoned their plan of capturing the Jewish fortress in Tudela, and the remnants of the mob were dispersed by the troops. In taking a stand against the Shepherds, James II acted in harmony with the views of Pope John XXII and the government of France;²² but the king of Aragon was alone in his energetic measures to stop the Shepherds and save the Jews of his kingdom from further suffering. The same pope who urged the protection of the Jews against the Shepherds, in that same year (1320), authorized the inquisitor of Toulouse, Bernard Gui, to place the Talmud on trial once again (the first such occasion was in Paris in 1240: vol. I, 151). Books of the Talmud were burnt in Toulouse and in Per-

pignan.²³ But in Aragon and Castile such proceedings were not yet conceivable.

The following year (1321), Jews and lepers were burned alive in France on the strength of forged letters in which the Jews of Toledo were accused of having conspired with the Jews of France and the Moslems of Granada and Morocco to poison the wells in Christian countries. No data whatever have been preserved at Toledo, the alleged center of this conspiracy. The incitement, however, spread to Aragon as well. In the city of Teruel a Christian was arrested in 1321 on a charge of having put poison in the form of powder and poisonous herbs into the waters of that locality. After the man had been questioned under torture, he testified that two well-to-do Jewish artisans in a neighboring village were the guilty parties. The royal bailiff of Teruel tried to protect the accused Jews, but the municipal judges rendered a verdict of their own. Though torture did not extract from them the desired confession and though the Christian later retracted the evidence given under torture, the Christian and one of the accused Jews were done to death in a most cruel manner. Not only that, but the whole populace was incited against the Jews. The details of the affair are given in a report sent to the king by the bailiff. The bailiff felt that the municipal judges had encroached upon his own legal authority in regard to the Jews, and felt it his duty to save the estate of the executed Jews for the royal treasury.²⁴ There is no way of ascertaining how the king and his officers regarded the accusation in itself. Other letters written by the king at the time convey the impression that he did not altogether disbelieve it, at least as far as the lepers were concerned. Nor is this unlikely, since it is known that he also gave credence to the false charges against the Templars. The king's humanitarian impulses toward the Jews might at any moment have been superseded by harshness and violence. For the moment, re

alistic considerations determined the government attitude in regard to the Jews.

THE DISTURBANCES OF 1328 IN NAVARRE

On the soil of Spain itself, widespread riots against the Jews broke out upon the death, in 1328, of Charles IV, the last scion of the House of Capet, the French dynasty which had inherited the small Kingdom of Navarre. The “Jew killers”—some 20,000 men, according to an official statement—gathered with intent to seize the places where Jews had fortified themselves and to kill the Jews found there and in the open villages. Local officials, the governors representing the king, tried to defend the Jews with the help of mercenaries, but these measures proved inadequate. In Pamplona only did the local representatives of the central government succeed in persuading the rioters to withdraw, in spite of the refusal of the local officials—the *jurados* (city elders) and the bailiff (actually an officer of the crown)—to protect the Jews. Some of the Jews fled to neighboring Aragon, then under the rule of Alfonso IV. Inhabitants of Navarre who took part in the disorders were fined, but a few years later the fines were cancelled.²⁵ The Jewish communities were rehabilitated. These disorders, which broke out in only one Spanish frontier province, were a sign and a warning to the whole Jewish population of the Iberian Peninsula that every interregnum was likely to bring disaster down upon them.

THE INTERNAL SITUATION OF THE COMMUNITIES OF ARAGON IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

The guiding lines of James II's Jewish policy more or less determined the status of the Jews of Aragon until the middle of the fourteenth century. Alfonso IV (1327–1336) enacted a law in 1333 resembling the legislation of Pedro III (vol. I, 175–176), under which the Jews were compelled to “declare” how much they made from moneylending, down to

the last penny. Alfonso's law, which was designed to extort money from the Jews and to drain them dry, was revoked soon afterwards.²⁶ The political, social and cultural position of the Jews deteriorated rapidly. From the time of Ibn Adret's death down to the middle of the fourteenth century, no political and religious leader arose in Aragon who could win popular recognition. On the other hand, there were among the Jews of that country sages and scholars, physicians, translators and a few astronomers. Some of these were refugees from southern France, and several were outstandingly interesting personalities. David Bonjorn (Yomtov) de Barrio (del Barri), who lived in Perpignan and Gerona, was an astronomer who at a later date built astronomical instruments for the young Pedro IV. David Bonjorn (known also in Hebrew literature) seems to have been one of the most charming and also one of the most irascible young scholars of his age. His temper was so violent that his second wife, after five years of marriage (in 1337), asked him to divorce her; and, in order to compel him to comply, withheld his scientific books and instruments. He complained of this:

They knew that books and instruments and other things were those which I hold most precious, and they could hardly have found a better means of coercing me than to deprive me of these things, which, in the light of my interests and desires and my longing for them, are my most cherished possessions.

David's father had admonished him in his will to have no financial dealings with the royal court of Majorca and not to engage in tax farming. His father also enjoined him not to live in Perpignan for ten years after his death, but to make his home in Collioure, one of the villages near that city. All this was apparently in harmony with the ideals then held by moralist preachers, whose type is described in

the *Sefer Hasidim* and in the *Even Boḥan* of R. Kalonymos. In 1327, soon after the death of his father, the young scholar appealed to James II of Aragon to annul the will, and the king hastened to comply, in the hope that he would be able to befriend the young star for the benefit of his court and country. David was the progenitor of two generations of scholars, the last of whom, a friend of Profet Duran, converted to Christianity in 1391.²⁷

Such, more or less, was the spiritual makeup of educated Jews in all the Mediterranean provinces—southern France, Italy, Catalonia. R. Kalonymos, who was then living in Catalonia, has well described, in his *Even Boḥan*, this circle of cosmopolitans who were not in the least perturbed by the disasters between 1306 (when the Jews were expelled from France) and the early 1320's, when he wrote his book. The sole desire of these men, as he portrays them, was to enjoy life's feast to the hilt; they were not even moved to repentance during the Days of Awe in the month of Tishri, but continued to indulge themselves in the revels of the vintage. One man boasted of his wealth: "With my own hands I populated this city. . . . In time of trouble I go to the house of the emperor to plead (Berakhoth 27b) . . . and who but I gladden his heart. . . . Can a moneyless man obtain the annulment of a decree?" Another bragged about his forefathers and lineage, "yet perhaps his family was the youngest from among those of whom it is written: They ravished the women in Zion' (Lam. 5.11; Kiddushin 71b) on the bitter day, in the time of oppression." R. Kalonymos then goes on to describe the professional scholars, each according to his learning and arrogance, the false and ignorant zealots among the cabalists, whose deeds are like those of Zimri, but who demand the rewards due to Phineas:

Wantonly they cut down the saplings; around the house of wisdom they built rebatements; and every province

does what is good in its own eyes. One man cleaves to his God in simple faith, without depth or acuteness; another in his simplicity conceives of God as a corporeal being; a third concerns himself with Cabala, and a fourth with philosophy. And each speaks most contemptuously of his fellow: "I suspect him of sin, he may be tainted with heresy." . . . As the number of our cities is the number of our gods! ²⁸

Not unlike R. Kalonymos, the anonymous mystic of Saragossa pleaded that the import of what had happened in his generation be pondered well.

For the hand of the Lord hath not waxed short for salvation [Is. 59.1]; and behold, fourteen years after the banishment of 5066 [1306], in the year of wrath [*af*: the numerical equivalent of which is 81. Here, however, the Hebrew year 5080–81 is meant] and anger the Shepherds came and slew about eight thousand men of Israel, as was shown to me by my teacher of blessed memory three years before the event, in uninterrupted visions, two years after he had departed this life. And concerning this matter I preached to the multitude on the verse "for the hand of the Lord hath not waxed short for salvation"—meaning salvation from the Shepherds—"nor is His ear dulled from hearing"—meaning from hearing the libellous accusations made against us of having poisoned the waters, on account of which they slew most holy ones in France. And what was the cause but your sins that separated us from God; and what are they but that your hands are foul with blood [Is. 1.15], that is to say, with plunder; for he who deprives his fellow of a penny is as one who has taken his life.

The mystic proceeds to enumerate the many acts of injustice committed by members of the community of Saragossa, in the powerful style of one of the great eschatological preachers. He awaited the Redemption in the year of "The

snare [*Pah* = 5088 = 1328] is broken and we are escaped” (Ps. 124.7). This indicates that the above words were written before the destruction of the communities of Navarre in that same year.²⁹

Only in the communal institutions was a certain degree of progress noticeable, and this ran parallel with that of the municipal administrations. In the reign of James II almost every *aljama*, large and small, was granted the right to levy upon its members a combination of indirect taxes known as *Cisa*; the communities were thereby enabled to adopt an efficient fiscal policy. In some of the communities the internal struggle for power was renewed. In Saragossa the lower classes seem to have achieved a temporary victory. But in Barcelona the communal authority was wielded by wealthy merchants like Hasdai Crescas,* grandfather of the famous philosopher, one of the “Ten Rulers” of Catalonia to whom R. Kalonymos dedicated his *Even Bohan*, and a man distinguished for his wealth, learning and leadership (he died in the Great Plague of 1348); Cresques Solomon; and others of the élite.

The internal organizational development of the *aljama* of Barcelona reached a critical stage of its history with the adoption in 1327 of a series of important *takkanoth* (communal statutes) which were approved by James II in the latter part of his reign. By virtue of these statutes all communal posts obtained by individuals by means of privileges granted them by the king were abolished, and severe penalties were imposed upon any future attempts to obtain communal posts by that method. The administration of communal affairs was to be entrusted to thirty members elected from among the best elements in the community, who were later known as the “Council of the Thirty,” or simply as

* Since the name has been generally written Hasdai Crescas, it is so written here. In the case of other persons bearing the same name, it is more correctly transliterated as Cresques.

“The Thirty,” on the model of the *Concejo de Ciento*, or Council of One Hundred, of the Christian municipality. The Thirty were to appoint all the communal officials—trustees (*neëmanim*), judges, accountants and charity wardens. They were to decide how the taxes should be collected; they were to draft *takkanoth*, and appoint special committees to deal with specific problems. Decisions were to be adopted by a majority of sixteen votes. The trustees were to call meetings of The Thirty at the synagogue or elsewhere, and to fine late-comers and absentees. The Council was to be elected every three years by the trustees and judges by majority vote, and members were to be eligible for re-election. Near kinsmen, like brothers, fathers and son, fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, were not to serve simultaneously on the Council. Within three days after the elections, the members were to take an oath to give honest and loyal service for the welfare of the community. The trustees were to be appointed for terms not exceeding one or two years, and were not eligible for re-election for successive terms. Differences of opinion between the trustees and individual members of the community concerning taxes were to be decided by a majority vote of the judges, from whose decision there was to be no appeal. The defendant had to pay the sum in question before the case was submitted to the judges. The trustees were to be the executive officers of the *aljama*, but their decisions were subject to the approval of The Thirty. Without such approval they were to have no authority whatsoever, whether to send delegations to the government or to appoint sextons. The annual salary of the sextons could be fixed at 100 *solidos*, a *quartera* of wheat every Passover, and a new coat every other year. All the sextons appointed before the adoption of the *takkanoth* of 1327 were to be dismissed. The salaries of communal emissaries were fixed in proportion to those paid by the municipality for similar services. Special appraisers (*taxadors*) were to be appointed to assess the taxes.

These *takkanoth* were written in the Catalan language with an admixture of Hebrew, and were read out on a Sabbath in the synagogue of Barcelona, along with the threat of excommunication for its violators. The *takkanoth* were submitted from time to time to the authorities for renewed ratification. These same *takkanoth* were considered important enough to be discussed in the halakhic literature. Even when they were already regarded as more or less obsolete in the city of their origin, other Jewish communities adopted them, making only slight changes in accordance with their special needs (Valencia in 1364 and Huesca in 1374). On the whole, this constitution was substantially the same as that of the municipality of Barcelona, except that in the *aljama* the Council of Thirty played a more important part than the Council of One Hundred in the municipality.

All the affairs of the community depend upon the choice of The Thirty; and those who choose them must exercise great caution, that they may be wise and prudent men, well versed in the laws, customs and statutes of the *aljama*, loving righteousness and pursuing peace, and looked upon with favor by the majority of the people. (R. Isaac b. Sheshet)

Unlike the municipal constitution, the *takkanoth* defined for the judges a status equally important with that of the *neëmanim*. This was due to the specifically religious character of the *aljama*.

The posts of the *neëmanim* and of the court are the most important in the *aljama*, and those appointed to them are always the greatest men in the community. It is customary to appoint even more important men to these posts if the appointments are made at the time of the election of The Thirty. (R. Isaac b. Sheshet)

The new constitution provided for a larger number of men in the administration of the *aljama*, but even then the lower

classes had no influence in the administration. Since the trustees, judges and advisers were elected by each other, and since the members of the Council could be elected for successive terms and the trustees could be re-elected after the lapse of only one year, control of communal affairs naturally remained in the hands of the “best families.” Indeed, until the 1380’s the register of names of trustees and of members of The Thirty contains the names of the same families as were serving in those capacities at the beginning of the century.³⁰

Except for the local *aljama*, there were few organizational bonds among the Jews of Aragon. Early in the reign of Pedro IV, one of his Jewish physicians, Magister Eleazar (Alazar) ibn Ardut (a native of Huesca; died about 1350) was appointed chief justice and appellate judge in relation to the judicial affairs and administration of all the communities of the kingdom. True, this authority was vested in him only because he had much personal influence with the king as his confidant, both in the capacity of physician, adviser, and that of diplomatic mediator in certain special matters. In this way the prestige of Jews close to royalty was revived by him for a short time in the Castilian manner, but ibn Ardut’s activities left few traces behind.³¹

THE EFFECTS OF THE PLAGUE OF 1348

In the year 1348, owing to the Black Plague, the first large-scale anti-Jewish disorders broke out in Aragon. The course of the disorders was different from those in northern Europe. In Aragon the disorders came earlier and bore the character of popular outbreaks; the authorities did not encourage them. Nevertheless, the communal *takkanoth* of 1354 (which will be discussed later) refer to anti-Jewish trials and to the torture of Jews in order to make them confess to false charges.

But the archives of the royal chancery of Aragon contain no references to such incidents. In Barcelona and smaller

communities in northern Catalonia Jews were killed, Jewish houses demolished, and promissory notes torn up (May-June 1348). Some of the Jewish notables of Perpignan underwent baptism to save their lives. In Monzon, Lerida and Huesca, the Jews entrenched themselves inside their walled quarters and so were saved. On the whole, however, the drafters of the *takkanoth* mentioned above summed up the situation correctly: "Many noble communities which had previously been safe and secure were destroyed suddenly. . . ." "A scattered flock of sheep is Israel!" The royal officials in Barcelona and the city fathers took steps for the protection of the Jews and banned public sermons of an inflammatory nature. It was the lower classes which, moved by religious fanaticism and superstition, rose up against the Jews. Actually, the Jews suffered no less than the Christians from the Black Plague. In Saragossa only one-fifth of the Jewish population remained alive. Later some of the localities could find no suitable communal leaders in their midst because most men of that caliber had died of the Plague. New cemeteries had to be installed for the burial of the numerous victims.³²

For the future protection of the Jews, Pedro IV created a new post in his privy council, that of commissioner for Jewish affairs. The post was given to an overbearing noble who was more likely to oppress the helpless than to defend them; his sole interest in the post was the salary the Jews had to pay him as its incumbent. The post was soon abolished, but the new source of revenue was assigned to the infant son of the king. The Jews, for their part, made an attempt to form a united association of all the Jews of Aragon. In December 1354, representatives of all the Jewish communities of Catalonia and of the province of Valencia assembled in Barcelona.

The resolutions, adopted by the conference and written in Hebrew, were signed by the following: R. Moses Nathan of Tarrega, a rabbi, wealthy merchant, and composer of verses in Hebrew and Catalan, who was in good standing

at the royal court and famous in his day for his learning and beneficence; Cresques Solomon, a talmudist and merchant of Barcelona; and Judah Eleazar, the autocratic *parnas* of the Jewish community of Valencia, who terrorized the Jewish population. Eleazar was a wealthy merchant who had financial transactions with the State, and was not distinguished either for learning or wisdom. The style in which the *takkanoth* are written leads us to assume that R. Nissim b. Reuben Gerondi, then rabbi of Barcelona (some of whose Hebrew letters have recently been unearthed), had a hand in their drafting. The conference decided to set up a standing executive committee of “elected ones,” two each from Catalonia and Aragon, and one each from Valencia and Majorca. The Aragonese communities had not as yet indicated their assent.

The functions of the executive committee were defined in the light of the experiences and disorders of the previous years. First of all it was decided to “embrace the throne of our king, may he be exalted and glorified, for he and his fathers have ever been merciful monarchs, and we dwelt among the Gentiles under their shadow.” The king was besought in the resolutions to request the pope, through his secretaries and envoys, to issue orders for the protection of the Jews, and thus to

bring to nought the evil designs of the populace who, should troubled days come, or should a plague occur, will commit acts of violence, saying: “All this hath come upon us for the sins of Jacob; let us destroy their nation and slay them.” For whereas in time of trouble they should act righteously and give freely to the poor, it is their foolish way to torment the unhappy Jews. And let the Pope command them that if, Heaven forbid, God should look forth from His heaven and send down one of His evil judgments, let them not, in defiance of His will, add another vile deed to their sins, but strengthen them-

selves to walk in His ways, among which it is commanded to cherish us as the apple of their eye, because upon their faith we rest.

Furthermore, they appealed to the king to persuade the pope to issue bulls against the accusations that Jews desecrated the host and against the customary Christian attacks at the Passover season, and also to restrict the jurisdiction of the Inquisition over the Jews by means of special laws. All this they hoped to obtain with the aid of the king and his envoys at the papal court. "For, indeed, we know what is needful for us—the heart knoweth its own bitterness—and have consented that men of wisdom and understanding be sent there, and that they see the matter through." The representatives of the aljamas also agreed to adopt joint measures for a campaign against informers, "the task now being left to us, for our shepherds have fallen asleep and our princes are gone, while the fence breakers go about at will and none will allow himself to be reprov'd, for the people are incorrigibly miscreant."

It was further decided to take united measures for defense and "retaliation," in the likelihood that disorders breaking out in one community should endanger the safety of the entire Jewish population of the kingdom. Other resolutions dealt with "privileges," under official seal, to be secured from the king to alleviate the burden of taxes, the cruelties of the tax collectors, and other kinds of coercion and extortion; there were also resolutions appealing for freedom of travel for Jews within the confines of the kingdom (from the royal domains to areas controlled by the nobles), and so forth. It was also decided to send "envoys from all the communities" to the sessions of the Cortes so that they might "watch over the interests of the communities."

Cresques Solomon, one of the drafters of the *takkanoth*, brought them to Avignon where, thanks to representations made by him and Jews from other countries, Clement VI is-

sued a bull denouncing as false the allegations that Jews had poisoned wells. It is not known whether the Jews achieved their other objects, and whether they secured the desired “sealed” documents (privileges) from the king. Privileges similar to those mentioned in the Barcelona resolutions were granted in 1383 to all the Jewish communities of Aragon following negotiations between the royal court and representatives of the aljamas. But the plans for a federation of all the communities of Aragon did not materialize; and it was only with great difficulty, after the aid of the authorities had been invoked, that the sums advanced by Cresques Solomon and others for the expenses of the attempt to federate the communities were collected from the aljamas. In 1357, three years after the Barcelona conference, Pedro IV instructed his physician, Magister Joseph ibn Ardut (brother of Magister Eleazar and successor to his post) to wind up those accounts; and as late as 1368 the heirs of Cresques Solomon had not yet been entirely reimbursed for the sums advanced by their father. The attempt to organize a joint body representing all the Jewish communities of Aragon and forming a common basis for their defense ended in failure.³³

PEDRO IV AND THE REORGANIZATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Nevertheless, by the 1360’s, the Jewry of Aragon had begun to free itself from its economic and spiritual debasement and to rise to a high level of culture which, however, was coupled with disquieting signs of social differentiation. The progress achieved seems to have been due partly to the efforts of a group of spiritual and political leaders from the wealthy class. But certain external factors also accelerated the progress. During the long reign of Pedro IV (1336–1387) the countries under his rule enjoyed peace for many years, except during the short intervals of the conquest of the Kingdom of Majorca (the Balearic Islands and Roussillon) in 1343,

the revolt of the nobles in 1347–1348, and the war with Pedro I of Castile. Naturally, the Jewish communities near the fighting zones suffered harm; and it is probable that at that time (end of the 1360's) the king may have threatened to expel the Jews from his kingdom, or from a part of it, as punishment for the misdeeds of two Jewish mintmasters. Our information on this matter is none too definite.³⁴

On the whole, Pedro IV's Jewish policy was definitely directed towards protecting the Jews, safeguarding the privileges of the *aljamas*, promoting their economic interests, and developing their institutions. This policy was dictated by simple fiscal, political and economic considerations. The role and significance of the Jews in the economy of Aragon cannot as yet be adequately determined. But perhaps some notion can be inferred from conditions in the neighboring Kingdom of Navarre. The many instructive fragments of registers and documents from Navarre which have been preserved indicate that after the catastrophe of 1328 many of the Jewish commercial firms of Navarre regained much of their former prosperity. These firms had an active share in the commerce of the country, particularly by importing cloth from Flanders and England; they also acted as commercial agents for the royal court. In this way they again obtained a large share of the tax-farming and of the fiscal administration of the kingdom. The archives of the royal chancery of Navarre, which are still preserved at Pamplona, contain many checks and receipts signed in Hebrew by Jewish agents and physicians who had some connection with the royal finances.³⁵ Nevertheless, it is not possible to draw from the situation in the small country of Navarre direct inferences concerning the policy of the large adjacent countries, where political and economic considerations impeded the progress of the Jews.

As far as the few commercial documents which have so far been published and which have come to my notice can be relied upon, the Jews of Aragon seem to have played only a

moderate role in the commerce of that country. Their commercial activities were restricted, in the main, to the areas they inhabited. As was the case in the thirteenth century, the Jews of Aragon are found to be engaged in commerce and in the manufacture of cloth both in their shops in the Jewish quarter and outside its walls in the Christian market places. But the interurban commerce conducted by Jews seems to have been on a smaller scale than in the previous century.³⁶ The Jews of the city of Valencia bought raw materials—Iamb's wool and grain produced in that district—and engaged in maritime trade. Only in Majorca was the Jewish community of international commercial importance. (More will be said on this subject when we discuss the various Jewish communities.) That Jewish prosperity was then at high tide is evident from the fact that Jewish merchants were again employed by the royal court for its private transactions. Among the financial assistants of Pedro IV, after the Black Plague had passed, were Don Judah Eleazar of Valencia, one of the drafters of the *takkanoth* of 1354, several other merchants from Barcelona, including Hasdai Crescas, the well-known philosopher, and lastly members of the de la Cavalleria family of Saragossa, which had declined in prominence after the death of Don Judah, treasurer of James I, and had again risen to affluence. In spite of the principles adopted by James II in regard to the Jews, these men had a part in, and to some extent influenced, the fiscal administration and at times even the diplomatic negotiations from the 1360's on.

But the Jews were no longer as prosperous as they had been in the days of James I and Pedro III. In general, the Jews of Aragon were of humble social station—shopkeepers and artisans who also worked in their fields and vineyards. No longer, as in the days of the Reconquest, were large estates concentrated in Jewish hands, though the archives do contain references to Christian tenants and laborers tilling

Jewish land. Vigorous economic progress depended upon the exercise of decisive political influence, such as the Jews had had until the close of the Reconquest period, but had lost entirely thereafter. Other hampering factors were now revived in the nature of disorders and scandalous religious-political trials. In addition, the Jews naturally suffered, like the Christians, from the plagues and droughts that devastated Spain and all the rest of Europe in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Nevertheless, there is reason to assume that in several cities the Jewish population not only did not decline, but even increased. Without such an assumption, it is hardly possible to explain the complex development of the executive bodies of the *aljamas* and the class struggle within the communities. And even during the fourteenth century, new rural Jewish communities were established here and there. Opportunities for large-scale economic expansion were denied to the Jews of Aragon. Nevertheless, this segment of the Jewish people and this period of their history are of exceptional interest and importance because of certain social problems that stand out in very strong relief and because of the cultural eminence of a number of men, both Jews and Christians, who took active part in the battle waged for the existence of the Jews.

Don Pedro IV was an educated man who sympathized with the humanistic movement of his day; but he was also unstable, harsh, and at times inclined to believe in the current superstitions. Still, the requirements of practical politics and the enlightened mind of the king retained the upper hand. In his reign taxes were as oppressive for the Christian municipalities as for the Jewish *aljamas*; the measures adopted for the collection of taxes were frequently akin to outright robbery. But the king was firmly resolved to suppress the growing anti-Jewish religious agitation. Only rarely were his actions inspired by religious fanaticism and mistrust. He aspired to be

a cultured and enlightened monarch; and, indeed, he loved learning like Alfonso X of Castile, Robert of Naples and the humanistic Italian princes of a later period. Pedro IV was assisted in his scientific projects by Jewish scholars. In his service was a retinue of Jewish physicians, translators, astrologers and astronomers, makers of astronomical instruments and watches, and cartographers who, by expanding the boundaries of geographical knowledge, paved the way for the great discoveries of the fifteenth century. Pedro IV also had at his court a Jewish alchemist by the name of Magister Menahem, and many Jewish craftsmen who at times were compensated for their work with communal revenues and posts assigned to them by the king.³⁷ Many of the Jewish scholars at court were active on behalf of their people, and hold an honored place in Jewish literature and in the annals of the Jewish religion.

The influence wielded by the above-mentioned Jewish financiers may be ascribed to some extent to their intimate personal contacts with the king and other members of the royal family. Pedro IV could not allow himself, as had his thirteenth-century predecessors, to appoint such men to official positions; but his personal relations with them were uninfluenced by religious inhibitions. His wives—two died and he married a third—his sons and their wives, who were active in the affairs of state during his reign, in the main followed his example. Only his son Juan allowed himself to be somewhat influenced in his youth by religious extremism; but, on the whole, he followed the trail blazed by his father. The relationships between the royal family and Jews of distinction were intimate and courteous. The Jewish financiers were regarded as loyal counsellors of the king and his family. In accordance with the court regulations, the Jewish physicians exercised a kind of paternal supervision over the conduct of the members of the royal family. Other Jews who were intimate with the king and the rest of the royal family will be discussed elsewhere in this book.

There was also a personal element in the attitude of Pedro IV, his family and officials towards the Jewish communities and their leaders. Since the days of James I, no king of Aragon had granted to the aljamas privileges so numerous and so extensive, and it is an amazing fact that Pedro IV granted the Jews of Aragon wider powers of criminal jurisdiction than they had ever enjoyed before. This is all the more striking in view of the fact that the regime permitted no action, important or not, to be taken by local authorities without the sanction and intervention of the central government. No decision, no election, no legal matter but was subject to official approval. The royal court intervened in the most intimate religious matters, both communal and personal. And the nobles followed the king's example in regard to the small Jewish communities under their own protection. The example of the nobles was followed, in turn, by the royal officials—governors, treasurers and others—the educated classes (law students in particular) and sons of nobles in the government services. To be sure, not every official was a man of good will. Some were fanatical and superstitious, while others were avaricious men whose sole object in life was to enrich themselves at the expense of the Jews.

The king's interest in the internal arrangements of the aljamas coincided with certain trends in the Jewish community. In Europe in general and in Spain and Aragon in particular, the latter half of the fourteenth century was a period of economic crises and social conflicts which produced, coincidentally with the anti-Jewish disorders, manifestations of a like ferment in the Jewish community itself. This phenomenon in Jewish life is most astonishing, seeing that the large Jewish communities were small even when judged by the standards of an age of small populations. The dangers threatening from without should have made for greater cohesion and unity within the camp. Pedro IV encouraged democratic tendencies both within the municipalities and within the aljamas. The best of the royal officials followed his ex-

ample. These men regarded the intrigues in the Jewish quarters with a mixture of sympathy and contempt, even though urban Christian society was no better, and the officials themselves, as already mentioned, were not always over-scrupulous.

There may have been some connection between the struggle for power within the Jewish communities and certain religious differences (to which reference has already been made above) stemming from earlier controversies. The attitude of the moralist preachers towards the heads of the community seems to have been dependent upon the views of the latter in regard to religious values. If the rich and powerful men in control of the aljamas were loyal to the Jewish tradition, the religious leaders supported their autocratic regime; but if the communal heads favored secularization, apostasy and disloyalty, the moralist preachers fostered the democratic trends which were represented in the main by illiterate but God-fearing artisans. Such is the impression derived from a detailed study of the subject. The more we scrutinize the documents, books and fragmentary manuscripts, the more clearly do we discern the outlines of this complicated conflict. We find ourselves witnessing a widespread revivalist movement, which began in Barcelona and spread, particularly in the 1380's, to the other Aragonese communities. Traces of this struggle are found in the Hebrew literature of the period which, although it has attracted the attention of modern scholars, has not been placed in its proper historical perspective. Only a most detailed and comprehensive survey of conditions in the leading communities can shed light upon this important chapter in the history of Spanish Jewry.

REORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL CONFLICT WITHIN THE ALJAMAS

With the passing of the Black Death, the Jewish community of Barcelona was gradually restored to its former strength. In the 1370's, however, a new epidemic laid low the flower of Jewish youth. The Jewish community developed more slowly than the Christian population, which, the fourteenth-century epidemics notwithstanding, increased to 30,000 or 40,000; but the growth of the Jewish population was impeded by external factors. Though the boundaries of the city as a whole constantly expanded, the *callum* (Jewish quarter) was still restricted to its old site in the central part of the city which, though it had been comfortable enough in the twelfth and

thirteenth centuries, was now grown too small and no longer enjoyed its earlier political and economic importance. The governor's fortress (*castrum novum*), at the foot of which the Jewish quarter had been built, was now used by the Jews for public gatherings and perhaps also as living quarters; but it was inadequate for defense in very unsettled times. Lying near the cathedral, the Jewish quarter of Barcelona had become a typical crowded ghetto, which had few counterparts on the soil of Spain. A second Jewish quarter, Sanahuja, which was built in the fourteenth century, was too small to ease the congestion to any extent. It is not unlikely that some few Jews had houses outside the Jewish streets. Not all the houses within the quarter belonged to Jews; some were owned by Christians who leased them to Jewish tenants. Several hundred families were huddled together in that overcrowded area.

The fact that the Jewish quarter was situated in the heart of the city made it possible for the municipality to subject its inhabitants to restrictive regulations, both religious and economic. A fair degree of prosperity was enjoyed only by a few merchant-bankers, most of whose business was with the royal court. There are no data showing that Jews made loans to Christians in the towns and villages. The extensive commerce and harbor of Barcelona afforded a livelihood to a few Jewish brokers. The Jews had but little part in the maritime trade, having no ships of their own. The last references to Jews travelling from Barcelona to Alexandria, Cyprus, Damascus and Palestine date from the middle of the fourteenth century. No reports of such journeys in the 1370's and 1380's have been found; but this may be accidental, because the notarial registers of Barcelona and other Catalan cities, where such records are to be sought, have not yet been thoroughly scrutinized. In general, political conditions were not conducive to free commercial enterprise on the part of Jews. In 1381 the municipal council of Barcelona forbade the

Catalonian consul in Alexandria to rent rooms or shops in its *fondaco* (inn) to Jews or Moslems. As a rule Jews participated in foreign trade by means of indirect maritime loans or *commenda*. Now and then we find a Jew coming down from Marseille to Barcelona on some commercial errand.

On the basis of the data at my disposal, I am inclined to assume that at least half of the Jews of Barcelona at this time were artisans: weavers, dyers, tailors, shoemakers, engravers, blacksmiths, silversmiths (including some highly esteemed craftsmen who made Christian religious objects), bookbinders (who bound the registers of the royal chancery), workers in coral, and porters. Nor was there any lack of skilled physicians in the community of Barcelona. Two of them were, in fact, physicians to the royal family.¹

The *aljama* of Barcelona was still administered under the aristocratic constitution of 1327. The archives contain the names of about sixty men who headed that famous community during the last twenty-five years of its existence. No less than fifteen of these names appear in a list of Jews baptized in the course of the massacres of 1391.² In our next chapter we shall see to what extent those conversions were obtained by force. In any case, the shepherds of this flock obviously made no superlative efforts to achieve the crown of martyrdom. Some of the members of the Council of Thirty, *neëmanim* and judges, were descended from the leaders who had made their community great in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; others were newcomers to public life.

Among the former were scholars associated with R. Nissim b. Reuben Gerondi, an eminent teacher who initiated and coordinated a purposeful religious movement.³ His part in the drafting of the *takkanoth* of 1354 has already been mentioned. Just as R. Nissim himself had been invited by Hasdai Crescas the elder and Cresques Solomon to come to Barcelona, so now he, with the aid of Don Cresques Solomon and R. Moshe Nathan, persuaded the Ashkenazi talmudic scholar,

R. Perez ha-Cohen, to settle there. The old high standard of scholarship at the *yeshiva* of Barcelona was restored by R. Nissim. In his sermons he declared war on the philosophical rationalism that destroys religion; but he had to be careful in his admonitions, according to his disciple R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet, who wrote:

In Barcelona I saw our teacher, Rabbi Nissim of blessed memory. When he wished to exhort some of the wealthy men of the congregation, they defied him and ignored his counsel, although some of the notables were his kinsmen, associates, friends and disciples. His fame was great among the Gentiles, and how much the more so in Israel.

Among R. Nissim's most distinguished disciples were R. Hasdai Crescas and R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet, both members of very old families in Barcelona which, by 1367, were taking an active part in communal affairs. These protagonists of the religious trend had to fight for their ideals amid an atmosphere of grim political and religious struggle.

In 1367 the whole community was accused of having bought the Christians' consecrated host. A thief who was caught confessed to the king's son Don Juan and his advisers that he had stolen a silver pyx containing consecrated bread, and sold the stolen goods to Jews in Barcelona. The name of the chief buyer he gave as that of a certain Jew, Provençal de Piera. The latter broke down under torture and "confessed" that he had bought the sacred articles and sold them to a Jew by the name of Astruc Biona, who was related to R. Vidal de Tolosa (author of the *Maggid Mishneh*, the well-known commentary on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*) and to Maçot Avengena, banker to the king. The tortures unhinged Astruc's mind, and he attributed to Solomon Sescalet, one of the *ne'emanim* of the aljama, a share in the purchase. But Sescalet remained steadfast under the most ghastly torments, and refused to admit a

crime he had not committed. His staunchness so impressed Astruc Biona that he retracted his confession and, though tortured again and again, remained faithful to his conscience. This cycle of evidence and confessions was typical of such trials. The false charges were usually disproved when the time came for Jews to be tortured who possessed the moral fortitude to withstand such ordeals. Needless to say, the consecrated bread was never found because the story had been invented out of whole cloth. Nevertheless, the infante had three of the Jews tortured to death. So the young infante reported to his father the king in a letter written early in July 1367, in which he justified what he had done and tried to show his moderation in passing judgment. About six months later the king himself visited Barcelona, and ordered all the Jews—young and old, men, women and children—to be shut up in the local synagogue without any food. As this peculiar procedure elicited no confessions or evidence from the Jews, the king withdrew all the charges. R. Nissim Gerondi, R. Hasdai Crescas, R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet, his brother Judah Crescas Perfet, and other notables were kept in prison for a time. The king informed his son about the matter in a letter dated November 30 of the same year.⁴

In those days R. Isaac b. Sheshet wrote to another scholar:

Almost five months ago unruly men rose up in our midst and accused our great rabbi, R. Nissim Gerondi (God preserve him), and six notables of our community, among whom were the scholar Don Hasdai (Crescas) and I and my brother (long life be his: Amen), and handed us over to the authorities. We are still under bail through no fault of our own.

That the community finally emerged unscathed from this ordeal was due solely to the moral force of its members, who did not flinch during the terrible days of their confinement. But R. Isaac b. Sheshet himself wrote about the “sons of Belial in our midst” and about “scoundrels amongst our peo-

ple” who made false charges against the scholars and notables mentioned above. But what can the generation’s leaders do if their generation does not appear to good advantage? The leaders can guide them with gentleness, each according to his gifts (even as Ibn Adret in his day used to teach): “The left hand should push away, while the right draws closer.” To a certain rabbi who suffered such indignities at the hands of the arrogant men, he offered the advice to bear it all in silence and to let the arrows be deflected by piety. Thus he describes the irreligious aristocracy who had so much power in Barcelona. Yet the same R. Isaac, who advised his colleague to exercise self-restraint, found himself compelled, in the year 1368, to excommunicate a certain wealthy Jew, Ferrer b. Maçot ibn Janah, for having deliberately and grossly insulted him. Permission to proceed with the excommunication was granted on request by the king, who made known his agreement in letters to the royal bailiffs and to R. Nissim.⁵ It was to this incident that R. Isaac was apparently alluding when he wrote:

And afterwards we were sorely distressed by the scoundrel who ventured to raise his hand against the anointed of God, the aforesaid dignitary [Hasdai Crescas, who has been previously mentioned], he and his father loudly cursing and reviling him. May God cut off their lips! And this was the cause of our perplexity and distraction.

R. Isaac finally left his native city and accepted the post of rabbi in Saragossa. When, shortly afterwards, R. Perez ha-Cohen, R. Nissim Gerondi, and R. Vidal de Tolosa passed away, R. Hasdai Crescas remained practically the sole survivor of that eminent group of Barcelona scholars.

Hasdai Crescas, whom we will discuss at length elsewhere, was the unchallenged leader of the forces that strove, amid an ugly atmosphere of mutual bickering and suspicion, to maintain a semblance of national and religious discipline

within the narrow walls of the ghetto. About this time (in 1377), constant negotiations were being held in regard to the right of the aljamas to try criminal offenses; in fact, although the order was shortly withdrawn, a royal edict did for a time curtail the juridical powers of the Jewish communities. This fundamental issue will be considered more fully below. Here we shall limit ourselves to an incident which took place in 1381 and which sheds considerable light on certain social and religious antagonisms within the Jewish community.

One of the Jewish members (*familiars*) of the queers household, Moses Hanoch, had denounced a number of communal trustees (*neëmanim*) at a legal inquiry instituted by the king's son. At the request of the trustees, Don Juan had the man arrested so that the truth of the matter might be established. The communal trustees and judges, among them Hasdai Crescas, tried the informer and sentenced him to twelve years' exile from the whole province of Catalonia. When the infante annulled the verdict, the communal leaders excommunicated Hanoch. After the queen interceded in Hanoch's behalf, Pedro IV sent a letter bearing his personal signature to the trustees and the *berurei* 'averot (commissioners of vice: see vol. I, 225) of the aljama of Barcelona in which he rebuked them violently for a miscarriage of justice in the case of Hanoch, whom he considered to be innocent, and ordered them to remove the ban immediately. "Know ye," wrote the king, "that by so doing, you will cause us pleasure and render us a special service; otherwise, you will incur our severe displeasure." Several days later the king notified the royal bailiff in Barcelona that he had removed Hanoch from the legal jurisdiction of the Jews and authorized him (the bailiff) to conduct the trial. It was a foregone conclusion then that the man would be acquitted.⁶ Moses Hanoch seems to have been one of the newcomers to Barcelona who intimidated the people.

At about that time the trustees and judges of the aljama

were unable to reach a unanimous agreement concerning the elections to the Council of Thirty, and therefore appointed two arbitrators, who in turn delegated their authority to unfit persons. The incident was recorded in the “Book of the Thirty” over the signatures of two men representing the trustees and judges respectively. All the other leaders of the community refused to sign the record. The belligerent minority, which had engineered the elections, invoked the aid of a royal courtier. The latter ordered the arrest of the refractory leaders, who were to be deprived of food and beds until they signed the protocol under compulsion. The trustees then asked R. Isaac b. Sheshet, who was living in Saragossa at the time, for a ruling on the validity of the irregular elections, and described the situation to him in metaphorical language: “They called to the fly and the bee in storm and tempest . . . Satan came and sowed dissension.”

R. Isaac b. Sheshet’s responsa on the constitution of the Barcelona *aljama* indicate that the leaders tried to extend the scope of their jurisdiction by diverse means. Instead of the legal elections under the *takkanoth* of 1327, they instituted a system which jurists call *electio per compromissarios* (elections by arbitrators). In essence, all these intrigues reveal the usual symptoms of a corrupt oligarchy. The meek and humble pietists, the poor, and the artisans, who constituted the majority of the Jewish population, could not long reconcile themselves to such a situation.

The democratic trends triumphed in 1386 both in the municipality of Barcelona and in the local Jewish community. Under a law which went into effect that year under a royal edict, the municipal council was constituted of representatives of the three Estates: the urban notables (*ciutadans honrats*), the merchants, and the artisans. This reform was enforced by command of Pedro IV. Similarly, the *aljama* was reorganized with the active assistance of the royal treasurer (*thesaurarius*). The new communal constitution, which went

into effect under the royal edict of April 2, 1386, was drawn up with his assistance. A proportional system, modelled on that of the municipalities, was devised for the election of the heads of the *aljama*. The three trustees and the Council of Thirty were elected from among the representatives of the three Estates, and in this respect the Third Estate was but little less privileged than the other two. Five representatives of each of the three Estates, together with the three trustees, formed the smaller council. Ten councillors withdrew every year so that others might be elected in their stead. The trustees were elected annually, and were eligible for re-election only after a lapse of two years. The powers of the trustees were limited in comparison to those they had enjoyed under the *takkanoth* of 1327. The trustees were not permitted to farm out indirect taxes except with the approval of the Council or of a small committee appointed by the Council. Their expenditures, also, were subject to the approval of the Council, but they had a certain amount of leeway in allocating funds for bribes to prevent assaults on the Jews on Good Friday. Delegations could be sent only with the approval of the Council. The fees of the delegates and the wages and number of the sextons were reduced. A short time previously the communal treasury had been entrusted to special treasurers (*clavaris*), who were appointed by the royal treasurers. The tax appraisers (*taxadors*) were also elected from among the three Estates. The taxes were assessed jointly with the royal bailiff and under his supervision.⁷ It is regrettable that the names of the Jews who were instrumental in introducing these reforms are not known to us. In the municipalities the democratic trend was halted by John I, who re-imposed the rule of the aristocracy. In the Jewish communities the social conflicts ceased with the outbreak of the terrible massacres of 1391.

No records are extant of the internal life of the community of Barcelona during the last five years of its existence. Hasdai

Crescas left the city within a few years, in order to head the Jewish community of Saragossa. Possibly Barcelona no longer afforded him a suitable field of activity.

In the smaller communities there was no room for such complex constitutional problems. In most of the Catalanian communities it was not customary to appoint communal councils, in addition to the trustees, before the middle and latter half of the fourteenth century. In Perpignan, councillors (whose number varied from twenty to twenty-eight) were elected for life. Some of the members were kinsmen and so could not testify against one another. On the death of a councillor the survivors co-opted his successor. In 1384 the public prosecutor (*procurator fiscalis*) proposed for that reason to institute legal proceedings against the *aljama*, but the infante Don Juan set aside the indictment and confirmed the *status quo*. The infante explained his action on the ground that the councillors were trustworthy men (*probi homines*) who conducted themselves honorably and would certainly co-opt councillors who, like themselves, would work for the good and welfare of the community.⁸ Owing to the high esteem in which secular culture was held in Perpignan, several physicians were always to be found among the members of the Council. The artisans were not allowed representation on the Council, though their number seems not to have been small. The tailors organized a mutual aid society among themselves and also founded a hospital of their own.

An oligarchic communal administration was necessitated by the local conditions in the medium-sized and smaller communities, especially after the plagues of 1348 and the 1370's, because few men capable of communal leadership had survived. The community of Gerona had always been a center of learning; and yet its internal organization was planned in 1341, by the king's command, by two outsiders, notables from Barcelona. These men drafted *takkanoth* for the election of the trustees, auditors, "criers" (*makhreizim*) and members of the

dual Council (twenty-six in one section and sixteen in the other). In 1354 the government refused to allow five Jewish notables to be elected as trustees unless they submitted a report on their previous term of office. The required report seems not to have been submitted, and yet in 1374 the king revoked his order against their (and their sons') election as *neëmanim* (trustees) because, as he pointed out, so few Jews had survived the epidemics in Gerona that hardly any were left capable of holding office as trustees.

In 1386 a quarrel of such violence broke out in the Gerona community that the infanta Violante, wife of Don Juan, abolished all communal offices except those of the *berurei 'averot* and *berurei tevi'ot* (vol. I, 226), and provided the community with a new constitution (of which no copies have so far been found). This constitution was a dead letter in fact owing to the death and impoverishment of many of the communal leaders. Finally, with the permission of Dona Violante, who in the meantime had ascended the throne, a new constitution was drafted and publicly promulgated in April 1391, about three months before the outbreak of the violent disorders. This document contains the names of all those who were to serve on the Council, which was to have twenty-three members: twenty-one from the *call* (Jewish quarter of Gerona) and two from the *collecta* (neighboring villages). Sixteen of the councillors were elected for life; or they might be represented for two- or three-year periods by near relatives (sons or brothers), who were also mentioned by name in the constitution. The remaining fifteen seats in the Council were reserved for fifteen members who were to serve three-year terms in rotation. The villages were represented by three two-man teams, each serving on the Council for three-year terms in rotation. Deputies (*elegidors*), acting on behalf of the Council, were to choose annually three trustees and one *clavari* (treasurer). Members of the Council were also eligible for appointment as *neëmanim*. The treasurer was chosen from

among the small tax-payers and received an annual salary. Relatives of trustees were not eligible for the post of treasurer. Some of the men mentioned in the constitution are known, from references in Hebrew literature, to have been distinguished for their piety and learning. Most of the members of the community were successfully to withstand the imminent trial. Economic deterioration led to faulty administration of the communal affairs. The heads of the Gerona municipality in 1389 referred to the *aljama* as “entirely ruined and dead.” ⁹

Special conditions prevailed in the community of Majorca, the capital of the largest Balearic island. The rulers of the kingdom of Majorca, which, between 1276 and 1344, was not under the dominion of the Aragonese crown, were most devout Christians and oppressed the Jews in various ways. But when, during Pedro IV’s reign, the island came under his crown, the Jewish community of Majorca became great and prosperous. Some of its greatness and splendor seems, however, to have existed only in the imagination of exiles from the island who settled in Algiers after the massacres of 1391. According to these exiles, their community had consisted of about 1000 households. It is more likely that the combined Jewish population of the city of Majorca and the villages roundabout reached about half that figure, which would not be small for a community that had lost very many of its members through the epidemics of 1348 and the 1370’s. It was said of the rich Jews of Majorca that they had had all sorts of valuables in their homes: “great stocks of silver and merchandise and secret treasures, gems and pearls, and caves filled with golden dinars. If a man lacked all these, even though he had possessions of jewels and thousands of gold pieces and a good profession whereby he earned his livelihood and more, he was considered poor.” Indeed, there was hardly another medieval Jewish community that enjoyed so high a degree of prosperity as Majorca, which owed its wealth to its

central situation at the crossroads of maritime commerce in the Mediterranean. Jews traded on all the shores of the Mediterranean and often made business trips to continental Spain and North Africa. The Jews had long had commercial agents in North Africa, a fact that gave rise to slanders and libels against them. They were suspected of revealing political secrets to the Moslems of Algiers and Morocco, and tales were circulated about the alleged licentiousness of Jewish men and women from Majorca who visited those countries. This much is undoubtedly true: that the exiles from Majorca found haven in Algiers in 1391 which had been prepared for them a short time previously.

The leaders of the Majorca community grew rich in the maritime trade. A wealthy Majorcan Jew, “the exalted one, chief of the benefactors, who was their prince, the eminent Don Jucef Faquim” (Joseph Haquim), settled in Majorca, as he himself related, after travelling all over the world. In 1365 he asked to be excused from assessing his own taxes, suggesting that the assessment should be made by the *neēmanim* of the aljama and two other Jews of aristocratic descent and unblemished reputation. Don Jucef asserted that all the possessions of his family were “acquired in the way of commerce, and were scattered all over the world—on land and sea—under circumstances of affliction and danger.” These possessions were insecure, and it was therefore difficult to assess their value. Don Jucef’s request was granted by the king.

In Seville and at the island of Sardinia there were cargoes of rusks and cloth that belonged to the Jews of Majorca. The rich Jews of Majorca loaned money to the municipality, and in periods of famine had an active share in importing supplies of grain. Like the Jewish communities of other Mediterranean ports, the community of Majorca helped to ransom fellow-Jews who had been captured by pirates. The island’s maritime connections gave rise to a whole generation of Jewish

cartographers and astronomers. A Jewish scholar and physician, Judah Mosconi (Leo Grech) found the island so attractive that he left Greece and came to live in Majorca. It is characteristic of conditions in Majorca that the circumcision or immersion (*tevila*) for proselitization of Jewish-owned Moslem or Tartar slaves was still a practical issue there, though not in other parts of the Kingdom of Aragon. On the other hand, there is nothing to indicate that Jews engaged in the slave trade. At all events, it is obvious that only a few Jews then were immensely wealthy. Generally speaking, there are indications that this community was not over-prosperous. Their maritime trade was conducted mostly on a limited scale. Like their brethren of Barcelona, the Jews of Majorca had no ships of their own. Most of the Jewish merchants did not make long sea journeys, but engaged in *commenda* transactions. They were unable to conduct their own trials before the mercantile court (*consulado del mar*) because most of them lacked the necessary knowledge of languages (Latin) and of law. When the mercantile court prohibited the employment of deputies and legal counsel by litigants in 1377, the Jews appealed to the king to restore the *status quo ante* for their sakes. It would appear that the Jews were not in the same situation as the great and cultured Christian merchants. In petitioning the king in this matter, the Jews overstated their case by asserting that the economic structure of their community was different from that of other Jewish communities because they did not lend money at interest, but dealt chiefly in merchandise. Yet in the list of privileges enjoyed by the Jewish community of Majorca, copies of which have been preserved, considerable attention is paid to interest-bearing loans given to artisans and farmers. Such transactions fed the hatred of the poor, who had suffered from famine and epidemics. By 1374 these people had begun to attack the Jews and to demand that all Jews, to the last man, should be banished from the island. But moneylending was not the

sole occupation of all the Majorcan Jews. There were many artisans in the community, but no information worth mentioning is available concerning them. Jews in moderate circumstances had fields and vineyards of their own. Late in the 1370's many poor Jews were in such straitened circumstances that they considered selling their land. The rabbis and scholars were besought to modify the Jewish interest laws for their benefit, so that they might be able to ease their situation by taking loans.¹⁰

Until the end of the fourteenth century, the communal affairs of Majorca were administered by the rich merchants. When Majorca was an independent kingdom, the *aljama* was headed by six *neëmanim*. Occasionally a council of eight "good men" who, however, seem not to have been regularly elected or to have had an actual share in the administration of the *aljama*, cooperated with the trustees. There was no lack of opposition to the trustees, but it was soon silenced. After his conquest of the island, Pedro IV at first confirmed the *status quo*. In 1348 it was the intention of the trustees to co-opt one of the "small" tax-payers for the distribution of the charity funds. A "large" tax-payer objected, and was supported by the king on the ground that the charity funds should be distributed by the largest contributors. Under the *takkanah* of 1356, which was ratified by the king, physicians and brokers were not eligible for election as trustees of the *aljama*. This would indicate that in Majorca those pursuits were regarded as inferior, as in other South European cities, and their practitioners were therefore excluded from communal leadership. It was at about this time that, after much dissension in the community, the governor of Majorca arranged for the election of a Council of Thirty, which thereafter carried on in a normal manner. In 1374 the king decreed that only "the old residents, upright men and large tax payers" should head the *aljama*, and forbade the organization of conspiratorial cliques for nullifying the decisions of the

Thirty. Finally, it was clearly recognized that the *aljama* must be reorganized along progressive lines. The immediate cause was not so much the complaints of the lower and depressed elements in the community as the quarrels and intrigues among the “ruling” families. The Faquim and Natiar families were engaged in a long-standing feud. In 1380 the king was asked to intervene, and thereupon he instructed the governor of Majorca to reconcile the parties and to compel them to give mutual guarantees for keeping the peace.

Two years previously, delegates from the *aljama* of Majorca, accompanied by Moses Faquim, one of the richest men in the community (who acted on his own), had submitted proposals for reforms in the communal constitution to the king and his treasurer at Barcelona. Pedro IV approved some of Faquim’s recommendations, and sent them, with the rest of the material, to the governor of Majorca, with instructions to make a close and careful study of the proposals still in dispute, “as this was a matter on which depended the very existence of the community in question and you are now dealing with subtle and complicated men (*gents subtils e entricades*).” Under the reforms approved by the king, the taxes were to be jointly assessed by representatives of the three Estates in collaboration with the governor. The trustees could be re-elected only after a lapse of two years. The votes of kinsmen sitting in the Council were to be counted as a single vote. In the actual administration of communal affairs no part was allowed to the lower classes; and in this respect nothing was changed. But even this minor alteration in the method of assessing taxes was annulled in 1380 by the infante Don Juan at the request of the *aljama* (that is to say, of the aristocracy), which claimed that the new method was too long drawn out. The *aljama* was then granted permission to distribute the taxes “according to old-established custom”—in other words, as the trustees and councillors alone saw fit. Similarly, in 1377, a “revolutionary” procedure was

reversed in the Christian municipality of Majorca which had been instituted four years earlier. This procedure, which provided for the election of the city fathers (*jurados*) and councillors by ballot, was dubbed impractical, because in such a way persons might be elected who were not fit to participate in the administration of the municipality. Only in 1397 was the municipality of Majorca granted a constitution which, by the standards of that time and place, was considered democratic. But disaster befell the Jewish community even before the reforms could be introduced.¹¹

Such a clearly oligarchic administration did not necessarily undermine the religious foundations of the community. In Majorca, as in the Jewish communities of the Iberian Peninsula, perfect religious discipline prevailed vis-à-vis the outer world. Though the scope of the criminal jurisdiction of the judges of the *aljama* was restricted under the kings of Majorca, the *aljama* continually tried to extend it, and its efforts were most successful in the reign of Pedro IV. Both the men and the women of the community were subject to the jurisdiction of the *berurei* 'averot, even when they sailed to Africa. The communal courts administered justice in accordance with Jewish law and with the specific traditions of the other Spanish-Jewish communities. Early in the fourteenth century, Rabbi Shem Tov Falcon, teacher of R. Aron ha-Cohen, the author of *Orhot ha-Hayyim*, was living in Majorca. The community enacted its own *takkanoth* concerning commerce, inheritance, and marriage, which represented a compromise between talmudic law and the laws and customs of the country. It was forbidden to consult scholars of other communities in matters involving litigation. R. Isaac b. Sheshet was critical of the customs of the Majorcan Jews which, like those of maritime peoples, were not very strict in regard to the halakha of *agunot* (deserted wives) and interest on loans. At a later time (in 1401), when the aged R. Isaac b. Sheshet, then living in exile in Algiers, was asked to rule in cases

involving forced converts (*anussim*) from Majorca, he replied that the laws of the local Christian community should be applied in their case because “even when these forced converts were still Jews, they were subject to the laws of the Gentiles, since the community of Majorca has always voluntarily conducted itself in this manner.” This statement is not in consonance with the facts.¹²

The community of Majorca did its best to become a center of Jewish learning and piety, and on this her pride rested. R. Solomon Zarfati, who was invited to come to Majorca by Jucef Faquim, brought with him the talmudic traditions of his native France. His rabbinical rival, R. Vidal Ephraim Gerondi, a member of a prominent Majorcan family, who served the infante Don Juan as an astrologer, died a martyr's death in 1391. His brother and scientific associate, Belshom Ephraim, was among the survivors of the disturbances who remained in their native country as Jews.

Another astronomer and talmudic scholar, who had been close to Pedro IV—R. Isaac Nifoci—did not achieve the crown of martyrdom, but atoned for his apostasy by migrating to the Holy Land. Two mapmakers (*magistri mapamundorum et buxolarum*), Cresques Abraham (d. 1387) and his son Judah Cresques, rose to considerable fame. By royal command these men received the profitable franchise to appoint ritual slaughterers—a situation that naturally called forth resentment in the Jewish community. Judah Cresques was baptized during the disturbances, and so his way was paved to a brilliant scientific career in the Christian world. This man, who was typical of a certain class of intellectuals found in Majorca and other Jewish communities, seems to have been destined to apostasy.

Moses Faquim, son of Jucef Faquim, was a confirmed Averroist and a political tale-bearer. In January 1391, shortly before the massacres, the Jews themselves informed the king that Moses Faquim blasphemed against all religions. He

would go to Christian churches on the pretense of wishing to embrace Christianity and comport himself accordingly. Then, on coming out, he would boast to the Jews of what he had done. At the very time when he was drawing closer to the Christians and their religion, he was seen walking barefoot on the Ninth Day of Ab as if mourning the destruction of the Temple like any other Jew. He drank the wine of the Christians and ate pork, transacted business on the Sabbath and resorted to the Christian courts. In order to hold up both Judaism and Christianity to ridicule, he would play at being a Moslem by holding Moslem religious services for his Moslem slaves in his magnificent residence in the Jewish quarter, and jest with them about the Jewish and Christian religions. This Moses Faquim was several times involved in acts of denunciation against the Jews, and even slandered his own father during the latter's lifetime by accusing him of a deed that rendered him liable to the death penalty. Men of Moses Faquim's stamp were to be found in all the large Jewish communities in Spain, so that his behavior must not be interpreted as indicating that the Jews of Majorca were especially degenerate.

In Majorca, as in continental Spain, there was a religious revival in the 1380's. R. Jonah Desmaestre was then active in Majorca. He made several journeys to Catalonia and Aragon, where he and R. Hasdai Crescas made representations to the royal court on matters common to all the Jewish communities of the kingdom. On such occasions R. Jonah, who was reputed to be one of the most distinguished and pious men of his time, interrupted his scholarly routine as head of the *yeshivah* of Majorca. It is related that the physician Don Todros ibn David, a prominent member of the Jewish community of Calatayud, was once a guest in R. Jonah's home. One day his host said to him: "Don Todros, I dreamt that I told you that, unless you set aside fixed hours for the study of the Torah, I would put you under the ban." The intellec-

tual yielded to the threat of the zealous pietist and asked him to remove the ban. And this was the procedure: A group of scholars of the house of study formally removed the ban threatened in the dream of R. Jonah. His famous son-in-law, R. Simon b. Zemach Duran, began his literary and communal activities in Algiers only after the disastrous year of 1391; his mathematical and astronomical knowledge however, and the wide talmudic learning and philosophic-mystical tendencies with which it was combined, were typical of his birth and education in Majorca, the home of Jewish astronomers. Additional evidence that a religious revival took place on the eve of the catastrophe is revealed by the following incident. In violation of the *takkanoth* of 1356, a physician, Magister Aaron Abdalhac, an intellectual who honored the Torah and a relative of R. Isaac b. Sheshet by marriage, was appointed some time in the 1380's, as a *neëman* and councillor of the aljama. In view of his medical duties, the magister asked to be relieved of his communal posts in 1382. Yet, as late as 1391, he and another notable were instrumental in having an informer hanged.¹³

The aljama of Valencia adapted the 1327 constitution of the Jewish community of Barcelona to its own needs in 1364. The Jewish community of Valencia may have been larger than that of the Catalanian capital, but it could not compare with the communities of Barcelona or Majorca in secular and religious culture. This explains the backwardness of the communal administration in Valencia. Now and then a physician served in an administrative capacity. But, on the whole, control was vested in the same families that had ruled the community at the close of the thirteenth century. During the period under review, until his death in 1377, the aljama was domineered over by the well-known banker of Pedro IV, Don Judah Eleazar. In 1370 the community appealed to the queen to have this overbearing man expelled from their midst on the grounds that he had for many years handled the public

funds as if they were his own, while he and his family evaded the payment of taxes by various devices. The people were so cowed by him that no one ventured to arrange a marriage except with his approval.

From 1340 to 1380, the rabbi of Valencia was the sage R. Amram Efrati, whom R. Isaac b. Sheshet eulogized in the following terms:

He was an old man who had acquired wisdom and done many good deeds. All his life he did not budge from the tent of Torah, for he pitched it in the wilderness and caused roses to bloom among the thorns; and though he did not have many pupils and was not overly profound in talmudic learning, do we not know that "Whether one does much," etc.? * . . . He has been great in the kingdom for forty years, and he alone sat in the seat of the teacher . . . for he was one of the great men of the land, and dwelt in the midst of his people, and had many kinsmen there. Verily, I do not marvel if at times his pronouncements were not wholly correct, for he did not devote himself to the regular study of a talmudic text in the company of learned students, but read only in the books of the *Posekim* evening and morning.

Nonetheless, R. Amram ruled his congregation with a firm hand, and chastised all transgressors. During the last few years preceding the catastrophe of 1391, R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet himself held the post of rabbi in Valencia.¹⁴

In Saragossa, as in Barcelona, the walls of the Jewish quarter, which was situated in the center of the city, blocked economic expansion even after the period of decline in the first half of the fourteenth century and despite the natural increase in population. Most of the Jews of Saragossa were small shopkeepers and artisans. An official register of the year 1401 lists the following occupations for Jews who worked

* The full talmudic saying is: "Whether one does much or little, what matters is that *one's* heart be directed towards heaven."

in public stores and workshops: cloth merchants, furriers, coatmakers, wool washers, tanners, saddlers, shopkeepers, engravers, coppersmiths, ironsmiths, blacksmiths, turners, harness-makers, locksmiths, embroiderers, etc. Our information concerning the vocations of Jews is varied and comprehensive. The bishop of Saragossa had his own Jewish tailor. In Saragossa, as in other cities, the artisans organized societies for religious improvement and mutual aid. Copies of the rules and regulations of the shoemakers' society are still extant. The synagogue of the turners was used as the central meeting hall of the whole community. Some artisans were appointed as communal judges.

Approximately from 1340 to 1370 it was customary for the king and princes to grant privileges to certain Jewish craftsmen of Saragossa—shoemakers, jewelers, and even the keeper of lions—employed at the royal court. By these privileges the artisans were exempted from paying the communal taxes, and communal posts were bestowed upon them, with all the perquisites, such as those of “rabbi” in the synagogue (more likely, beadle), ritual slaughterers, scribes, and *albedin* (a form of police). For many years the *aljama* protested against such appointments by imposing bans and making representations to the authorities. Not until 1370, however, was a substantial change for the better inaugurated with an explicit statement by the infante Don Juan. As in the thirteenth century, so in the fourteenth, the clothing merchants (*draperos*) were held in high esteem in the Saragossa community. For three successive generations the *aljama* besought the Christian municipality to permit the Jewish *draperos* to have their shops in the Jewish quarter, and not necessarily in the Christian market-place under the supervision of the city's *jurados*. The Jewish *draperos* argued that they manufactured a special kind of cloth used only by Jews, and that they employed Christian widows and other Christian poor for the purpose. The documents relating to this matter are among the few

from which information can be derived concerning the organization of Jewish artisans in Spain.

In the period under review a number of Jewish physicians of Saragossa achieved considerable reputations. One of them, a surgeon by the name of Junez Trigo, who also owned a cloth shop and land outside the city limits, was highly praised for his services to the royal family and his concern for the sick of the city. In 1385 Pedro IV commanded that the right to chant the Torah reading on the high holy days should be granted to the Trigo family, the family which previously enjoyed that privilege having passed away. In January 1391, Queen Violante gave certain instructions for Trigo's benefit in connection with his taxes. In a document bearing the queen's personal signature, she referred, *inter alia*, to statements she had heard from local Christians about Trigo's activities: that he

treated in his home, at his own expense, and with great kindness, the sick and the poor and the hungry, though he knew that he could expect from them no remuneration in money or in any other form; and that he had taught his skill to many others, for he was not like a live coal that burns only for its own sake, but like a lamp that lights the way for others, for he imparted his knowledge to many men.

A physician by the name of Don Moses b. Alazar, who was on friendly terms with some of the rabbis, was commended in 1385 by the chapter of the Franciscan monastery in Saragossa for his many excellent services to the monks, and for having gone to much trouble in making visits and giving treatments to the inhabitants of the monastery. In appreciation of Don Moses' services, the monastery gave the Jews permission during his lifetime to carry their dead to the cemetery by a road that passed its church, provided only that they would not chant hymns or lamentations for the dead as they walked past it.¹⁵

As in the thirteenth century, so now there were “free Jews” (*francos*), descendants of the de la Cavalleria and Alazar families who did not participate in the organized Jewish community life. They were permanently exempted from paying taxes and took no part in the communal administration. Some even refrained from inter-marrying with the local Jews. Nevertheless, thanks to their high social and economic standing they were very influential in the community of Saragossa. The cultural progress of the Saragossa community was closely bound up with the name of the de la Cavalleria family. This distinguished Jewish family, one of whose members was the most prominent Jewish diplomat in the reign of James I (vol. I, 145), retrieved its fortunes after a decline of several generations. In the 1360’s several members of the family rendered financial services to the State. From 1361 on, Don Vidal de la Cavalleria collected imposts approved by the Cortes for arming the cavalry on behalf of the king and of the head of the Order of St. John. In 1372 he leased the gold currency of Aragon in partnership with a Christian citizen of Saragossa, the king’s treasurer. Don Vidal also farmed taxes jointly with a Christian jurist. After his death in 1373 his widow, Orovida, carried on his business affairs. Don Vidal was a scholarly man and was active in promoting religious discipline in his community. Nevertheless, he had his will registered with a Christian notary. Vidal’s brother and partner, Solomon, leased the customs of the Aragon-Castile frontier in the 1380’s jointly with his son. Solomon was active in Jewish communal affairs, served as a judge in difficult cases—sometimes at the special request of the king—and discussed practical points of Jewish law with contemporary scholars. He was also the author of some Hebrew hymns which have come down to us. In promoting the revival of Hebrew culture and championing the advancement of religion, Solomon was one of the leading figures of his day.

The most distinguished member of the de la Cavalleria

family was Benvenist de la Cavalleria, son of Solomon and son-in-law of Vidal. Beginning with the later 1370's, he appears in the role of banker and collector of church revenues on behalf of the Order of St. John and the archbishop of Saragossa. His services to Pedro IV, John I and Martin I still require clarification by further studies of the archives. In the 1380's he farmed some of the royal revenues, at first jointly with his father and later alone, chiefly in the city of Barcelona and the vicinity. In 1383–1387 Benvenist leased the customs of the Aragon-Castile frontier from Pedro IV and his son Juan, and in that way exercised much influence upon the administration of customs and upon the commerce of these frontier provinces, which were of considerable political and economic importance. The historic events of the previous century seemed to repeat themselves. Benvenist was on the way to an appointment in the political administration of the State, but the massacres of 1391 seem to have called a halt to his activity in any official capacity. In 1396, however, we find him acting as banker and tax farmer of the archbishop of Saragossa. About his relations with John I, whose reign was a critical period for the Jews, we have no information. Benvenist reappears on the political scene in the reign of Martin I. In 1401 he deals on behalf of the king with representatives of the Council of the Estates of Catalonia and Aragon, and takes part in negotiations for a marriage between members of the royal families of Aragon and Navarre.

In Jewish communal life, the name of Benvenist de la Cavalleria frequently appears in connection with important communal affairs. When the area under the administration of the small Jewish community of Alcañiz was extended in 1381, Benvenist was given a seat and a deciding vote in the tax committee of the enlarged aljama. He also appears to have been appointed deputy to the head of the Order of St. John, which owned the area together with its Jewish population;

but in this capacity he served only a few years. On several occasions Benvenist acted as judge and arbitrator in the communal affairs of the small aljamas in the vicinity of Saragossa.

Alazar Golluf's career was much like that of Benvenist. He was a member of an old and aristocratic family of Saragossa, which did not, however, separate itself from the Jewish community and its official organs. His high position at the court of John I and his wife Violante (see p. 92) enabled him to participate in Jewish affairs extending beyond the confines of his own community.

These men were loyal and devout Jews. The home of Benvenist de la Cavalleria, in particular, was a center of Hebrew culture and a refuge for his persecuted brethren in the days of the great catastrophe. Following in his father's footsteps, he fostered the growing interest in the revival of Hebrew culture and the advancement of the ancestral faith. It was his habit to sign State documents in Hebrew. His Hebrew letters, which are still extant, are composed in the well-known rhetorical manner and reveal the writer's knowledge of the Bible, Talmud, and Jewish philosophic literature. Solomon and Benvenist de la Cavalleria were friendly with R. Nissim Gerondi, and appear to have sided with R. Isaac b. Sheshet against his opponents in Saragossa. Passing differences apart,* both father and son held Hasdai Crescas in the highest esteem, and it was probably at their invitation that the great scholar settled in Saragossa.¹⁶

These trends towards a religious revival could, however, shape up only gradually. At the beginning of the period under review the communal administration was headed by merchants who were neither as wealthy nor as cultured as their predecessors. No distinguished talmudic scholar was living in Saragossa at the time. Late in the 1360's Magister Astruc Hasdai, an eminent scholar, settled in Saragossa, and was

* See page 84.

made warmly welcome by the community in the hope that he would be instrumental in improving communal life. His name, however, is known to us only from the official government records, and no data are available about his activities.

R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet became the rabbi of Saragossa in or about the year 1372/1373. The many responsa written by R. Isaac during his thirteen-years' ministry in that city shed much light on religious conditions in the Jewish community of Saragossa and in the Kingdom of Aragon as a whole. Once more the Jewish community of Saragossa became a religious center, and its leaders and scholars gave religious guidance and instruction to the smaller neighboring communities. But there were certain conditions in the central community itself that were not to the liking of a scholar like R. Isaac. He objected, for example, to the custom of having the Book of Esther read to the women in the vernacular. Shortly after his arrival in Saragossa he wrote to R. Nissim Gerondi:

Behold, when I came like the rain to all the people of this land, they opened their mouths wide to receive the torrent of my words with love and joy and gladness of heart. Both great and small looked to me to mend their fences and barriers against transgressions, for all understood that this was the need of the hour. I, too, found them lenient in most of their observances.

But the readiness for improvement, never shared by all, did not last long. R. Isaac's reforms seem not to have been restricted to matters forbidden or permitted by religious law, but also to have extended to fundamental social matters. Among R. Isaac's opponents were the judge Joseph b. David and several leaders of the *aljama*, all members of the old aristocratic families. One such individual, Isaac ibn Açfora, a cloth merchant who had lost his fortune owing to a libelous charge of theft made against him, gave a bond, in the presence of witnesses and on penalty of a fine, not to take

a concubine or mistress in addition to his wife, who was a kinswoman of R. Isaac b. Sheshet. Nevertheless, he had relations with a woman who was sentenced and punished as an adultress. R. Isaac wanted to excommunicate him. To this Açfora's family objected, because they feared that, if rigorous measures were taken against him, he would go over to Christianity. Açfora bribed the Christian officials and intimidated the community leaders. Finally R. Isaac b. Sheshet was compelled by the *merino* (royal official) to assure the sinner on oath that he would not take any action against him (*segurança de derecho*). The incident occurred in or about the year 1375.

In the ensuing years, there was an incident of a graver nature. At the time, the greater part of the communal administration was under the control of Solomon Abnarrabi, one of the highest-ranking *mukademin* from the years 1372 to 1379. Complaints were made to the royal treasurer, who supervised the administration of the *aljama*, that the community had been brought to the verge of ruin by faulty leadership. These complaints were made by the "larger and healthier sections of the community and also by the 'little people.' " Late in 1381, the treasurer, with the approval of the communal leaders, investigated the financial activities of Abnarrabi as a *mukadem* and trustee of the *aljama*. A local Christian and two secretaries from the royal chancery were co-opted for the investigation. Abnarrabi was completely exonerated. Nevertheless, the treasurer found it necessary to introduce reforms into the administration of the *aljama*. An official edict dated March 1382 contained an explicit statement to the effect that the *aljama* of Saragossa had been badly administered for a long time, and that its financial affairs were not properly conducted by the *mukademin*. It was found that the *aljama* was 200,000 *solidos* in debt. In the edict the *mukademin* were charged with responsibility for this situation because they exempted their relatives from the pay-

ment of taxes and allowed them special privileges in connection with the tax-farming. In order to forestall occurrences of this kind in the future, three “collectors” were appointed (as was customary in other aljamas) to take over the communal treasury from the *mukademin*. The communal administration was placed under the supervision of a royal commissioner. A municipal notary was appointed to keep the records of the aljama, which thereafter were written in the Aragonese dialect. Another reform provided for the participation of all three Estates in the election of the *mukademin* and councillors, a procedure already in force in regard to the levying of the *Cisa* (indirect taxes). In order to ease the tax burdens of the “little people,” who paid most of the indirect taxes, it was decided to impose a direct annual property tax of 12,000 *solidos*, a small sum compared to the large debts of the aljama. One of the first three collectors elected under the new system was Solomon Abnarrabi. The other two were new men: the physician Junez Trigo, who has been mentioned above, and Samuel Benveniste, a wealthy merchant from Soria (Castile), who had settled in Saragossa only a few years previously.

In 1383 and thereafter the name of R. Moses ibn Abez appears frequently in the lists of the *mukademin*. R. Moses also went to the royal court as *mukadem* and intercessor for the Saragossa community. Born in Tudela, R. Moses, a merchant by vocation, came to live in Saragossa only in the 1370's. He was learned in the Talmud, having studied under R. Solomon b. Hasdai of Tudela, and was a highly cultured poet who was destined to be one of the most loyal and active spokesmen for the Jews of Aragon in the critical years ahead. The rise of R. Moses is still another indication of the social and cultural changes which took place in a number of Aragonese communities after 1380.

The reforms of 1382 seem, however, not to have been entirely adequate. In 1385 an open revolt against Abnarrabi

broke out in the Jewish quarter. There had been differences of opinion between Abnarrabi and R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet, which were probably due to the misconduct of the *parnas* and the zeal and censoriousness of the rabbi. Abnarrabi did as Açfora had done a decade previously. In collusion with the *merino* (royal official) of Saragossa, he had the rabbi thrown into prison. Just then,

almost all the Jews of that community were incited by an evil spirit. They gathered themselves together and made a rebellion, breaking into the home of that Solomon with loud cries of “Death to Solomon Abnarrabi! Death!” And when they did not find him at home, they shouted again and again: “Burn him! Burn him we will!”

The people then brought fagots and other fuel and would have burned the house down had they not been prevented by the *merino* and several other Christians. Pedro IV ordered an inquiry to be made, with the usual result that a collective fine was imposed upon the whole community. The courageous rabbi had to yield to the belligerent *parnas*. R. Isaac had intended to leave Saragossa for Calatayud before the Abnarrabi incident, but the community invoked the aid of the authorities to prevent him from leaving and persuaded him to remain. Several weeks after the “revolt” he left Saragossa and settled in Valencia. All these things happened before the very eyes of men like Solomon and Benvenist de la Cavalleria, but we have no way of knowing their reaction. Only R. Hasdai Crescas, who was accepted as rabbi of Saragossa in 1389, was able to reconcile the internal differences.¹⁷

CRIMINAL JURISDICTION AND THE PROSECUTION OF INFORMERS

The dissimilarities between the constitutions of these small communities are indeed amazing; but far more so is the scope of the jurisdiction granted them for maintaining religious discipline and prosecuting informers. The contemporary docu-

ments in the royal chancery of Aragon shed new light on this serious problem. Details are lacking here about persons and events. However, we do possess a considerable body of information about the judicial authority of the aljamas. Pedro IV did much to confirm and define the semi-legal privileges that the aljamas had arrogated to themselves. None of his predecessors had gone to such lengths as Pedro in this respect. His policy may in some way have been connected with the development of criminal jurisdiction in the municipalities which, too, were granted full powers to try criminal cases only in the fourteenth century. But there was no real similarity between the situation in the municipalities and the aljamas in regard to criminal jurisdiction.

The far-reaching powers which the Jews requested from the kings prove the increasing dangers which the Jews anticipated during the decades which preceded the great persecution of the year 1391. The privileges given to the Jews in criminal cases were destined to serve as weapons for defending themselves against their enemies, both from within and without, who threatened to shatter the foundations of the communities. The full power of the communities' authority in this field is revealed even in the very orders of the king, which are actually intended to limit their rights. This also applies to the edict of 1377 for the reform of the criminal procedure of the aljama of Barcelona, against which complaints had been lodged with the king. The criticism was offered by the municipal authorities, who regarded the judicial activities of the Jews as an infringement upon their own authority, and by royal officials, learned lawyers who viewed Jewish court procedure as violating the progressive principles of Roman law. It is also not unlikely that reforms were urged by some of the Jews themselves.

The edict of 1377 empowered the aljama of Barcelona to deal with two different categories of criminal offenses. One of these categories was to come under the jurisdiction of the

berurei 'averot. They were deprived of authority to try any offenses for which the Roman or Aragonese law or the municipal regulations provided the death penalty or mutilation, or any cases involving litigation between Jews and Christians. All such cases were reserved for the jurisdiction of the royal bailiff. The Jews were also deprived of power to deal with violations of the market place ordinances, which were now to be handled by the *mustaşaf*, the municipal official in charge of the market place. The judicial authority of the *berurei 'averot* was to be limited, in the main, to sexual transgressions between Jewish men and Christian women or between Jewish men and Jewish women. In such cases, the Jewish judges retained the right to continue their semi-secret and informal procedure because

The Jews are few in number and all of them dwell within a limited area and narrow confines, and it is therefore easy for them to have complete information about the virtues and vices (*merita vel demerita*) of every individual in their midst; and those entrusted with judicial authority to examine and to try Jews can readily ascertain whether the witnesses for the prosecution are men of good or evil repute, little or much esteemed, dishonest or upright, rich or poor, friends or enemies of the accused; and they can readily and speedily ascertain other pertinent facts, such as whether the witnesses are wholly or only partly trustworthy. Therefore they can dispense with the testimony of some witnesses and summon others, as they see fit . . .

The following procedure was accordingly laid down for the *berurei 'averot*: they were authorized to arrest the accused or to release him on satisfactory bail. If an offense within their competence came to their notice—in the form either of a specific report (*certo nuntiatore*) or of a rumor—they were to look into the matter and take oral evidence (*inquirendo*

diligenter de dicto crimine sine scriptis), summon witnesses who were likely to know the truth, administer an oath to such witnesses while they placed their hands on the Ten Commandments, and question them about the offense—in particular, as to the time when it was committed. If they then found good reason for crediting the accusation, they might summon the accused and, at their discretion, inform him orally of the nature of the charge and the names of the witnesses who had testified against him. Since, however, publication of all the details of a case was likely to involve danger, hardship or injury to the public or to individuals, the *berurei* ‘*averot* were authorized, if they saw fit, to withhold the nature of the charge, the names of the persons involved, the names of the witnesses, and the evidence; or they might disclose some part of it. It was, however, their duty to make known the time of the occurrence so far as they were able to establish it. Indeed, the royal edict cautioned the *berurei* ‘*averot* to be careful in publishing evidence and to take due account of the gravity of the matter and of the character of the persons involved. After the evidence had been published, the *berurei* ‘*averot* fixed a date when the accused might call witnesses and submit other evidence in his defense. The witnesses for the defense had to testify orally under oath. The *berurei* ‘*averot* were required to admit written evidence for the defense, and then specify a second and a third date for the accused to submit evidence. If the accused alleged that the judges had not followed this procedure in every detail, the joint oath of the three judges sufficed to refute his allegation.

With regard to the juridical procedure against informers, the Jewish community of Barcelona possessed a privilege from the hand of King James II. Under this decree, the trustees of the *aljama*, in cooperation with five other Jews, were empowered to impose a corporal penalty upon informers, and the royal officials had to carry out their sentences upon pay-

ment by the Jews of a fee of 1,000 *solidos*. The decree of Pedro IV defines the categories of corporal penalties for informers: death, amputation of limbs, or “any other punishment not inconsistent with reason or law.” The accused was to be tried by the three trustees of the *aljama* and three *berurei* ‘*averot*. When an accusation was brought before them, they were to hold an inquiry. If the accused was found guilty, they were to decide, by a majority of four, on his punishment and pay the royal treasury the sum fixed for executing the sentence.

As for the detailed legal procedure, the Jewish judges were obliged to act in accordance with reason and law. When an offense was reported to them, it was their duty to take down the information in the Catalanian language. Then they were to summon witnesses, question them closely under oath, and have a second memorandum prepared by a Jewish or Christian notary. If they considered the evidence valid, they were to have the accused arrested by the bailiff’s guards and confined in the municipal jail; or they might release him on bail. The court had to provide the accused with a copy of the minutes of the inquiry and to designate two periods of thirty days each during which the accused might submit his refutations (*defensiones*). The evidence presented by the accused in his defense was then to be published by the judges. On the basis of these documents the judges (*neëmanim* and *berurei* ‘*averot*) were entitled to render their verdict. If nothing was proved and yet there were some indications in the evidence pointing to the guilt of the accused, the judges could have him put to torture, and it was incumbent upon the bailiff of Barcelona to have their sentences carried out by his police. In cases coming within the two categories of criminal jurisdiction mentioned above, the Jewish judges were required to record their reasoned verdicts in the bailiff’s register. These verdicts could not be appealed.¹⁸ The decisions of Pedro IV, here summarized, prove conclusively how much the jurisdic-

tion of the aljamas, resting on old traditions, had changed—in the years 1350–1377—under the influence of Roman and canonical forensic procedure.

Though the royal edict of 1377 was intended to restrict the scope of Jewish criminal jurisdiction in some respects, all the Jewish communities of Aragon were granted unlimited powers in judicial proceedings against informers only a few years later. In 1383, the heads and judges of the aljama were fully empowered to try informers (*malsinim umaçorot*) either orally or in writing, and to sentence them to exile, mutilation, or death, at their discretion, “with or without a trial, with or without witnesses, solely on circumstantial evidence which they considered sufficient on the basis of the judgment (*sentencia o glosa*) of a Jewish ‘doctor’ or ‘doctors,’ scholar or scholars, who had reviewed this matter and handed down a decision.” The sentence had to be carried out by royal officials within two days, no appeal or postponement being allowed.¹⁹

Particularly far-reaching were the powers granted in November 1390 to the aljama of Huesca by John I. These authorized the leaders of the aljama, acting together with six other Jews, to try informers at their discretion with or without a verbal or written indictment, “with or without published evidence, with or without counsel for the defense,” “in accordance with civil, canonical or Jewish law, or even not according to these legal codes.” Such sentences could not be appealed, and the royal officials were required to put them into effect without any delay. Once this was done, the king himself and his officials were not entitled to question whether or not there had been a perversion of justice. The accused was not permitted to avail himself of any document which might suspend the procedure. Moreover, any person presenting such a document to royal officials was liable to the death penalty, and the officials were enjoined to hang him by the neck or feet until he breathed his last.²⁰ From the foregoing, it is obvious that the whole purpose of the laws against in-

formers was to wage a political struggle in the most ruthless medieval form of which we are aware.

The Jews themselves ultimately seem to have recognized how unwise it was to entrust such grave decisions to each and every *aljama* and the limited outlook of its leaders. In September 1390, Queen Violante appointed R. Hasdai Crescas to be the judge of cases involving informers throughout the kingdom of Aragon, with authority to impose penalties, including capital punishment. Nevertheless, even this appointment did not entirely abolish the rights of the *aljamas*.²¹ As can readily be discerned, the restrictive intent of the edict of 1377 was superseded in the 1380's by a tendency to expand the judicial powers of the Jews. It is obvious that all the Jews—and particularly pious men like R. Hasdai Crescas and R. Jonah Desmaestre, who negotiated with the king in 1383—perceived the shaky political status of the community and anticipated the approaching catastrophe. With this in mind, they were able to persuade the royal family and high government officials to reinforce the means of defense at the disposal of the communal leaders.

Except for the *takkanoth* of 1354, the appointment of R. Hasdai Crescas as the supreme judge for the entire Jewish population of Aragon was the only attempt ever made to set up a unified permanent institution for all the communities of the kingdom. Generally speaking, each and every community acted as it saw fit, and many communities smaller than those of Barcelona, Majorca, or Saragossa were able to act on their own initiative by virtue of their political and criminal privileges. It was only thanks to the moral and social influence of some of its outstanding leaders that a central community like Saragossa was able to impose its authority upon the smaller communities in its district. Only in emergencies, as when the government demanded large sums from the Jews, or when the whole Jewish population was defamed or threatened, did the heads of the *aljamas* assemble for consultation and for joint representations to the royal court. A single, permanent body

in which united aljamas could meet at stated intervals was never constituted in Aragon, as it was in Castile.

COMMUNAL ADMINISTRATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF JEWISH SOCIETY

The social problems elucidated here on the basis of documents in the archives of Aragon help us to understand a number of phenomena which characterized the communal life of all Spanish Jewry, over and above any specific differences between Aragon and Castile. The meticulous care employed in the drafting of the *takkanoth* and the close study devoted to the detailed workings and general principles of the municipal and government institutions, reveal how deep was the interest of these diminutive bodies in political problems. They sought to learn not only from their own daily experience, but from the political and legal theories of the age. The *mukademin* and *ne'emanim* of these small communities aspired to be political leaders in the true sense of the term, and followed a meaningful Jewish policy, although generally speaking the walls of the Jewish quarter narrowed their horizon. But their policy was determined to some extent by ignoble social conflicts. Social developments in the Jewish communities almost led, as they did in the Christian cities, to open class warfare; but in the Jewish quarter the accumulated explosive material did not ignite in its entirety. In the cities of Aragon, John I helped to suppress the revolts of the urban artisans, which his father, Pedro IV, had encouraged, and restored the oligarchy to power. The Jewish communities were dispersed and depopulated by the massacres of 1391, which confronted them with new and different tasks. Until that disastrous year, however, full-blown and ruthless political ambitions prevailed in the Jewish quarters. Within the Jewish communities, as in the Christian cities, classes and families competed with one another for power, while from without the sword of treachery cut down great and small alike.

With the spread of social and political conflicts, religious

differences, which had existed for generations, became the more acute. The secular culture of the age was remarkably high. In the small towns and villages cultured Jews could be found whose libraries were very valuable by the standards of those times. Whole generations of families of distinguished Jewish physicians and scholars are known to us whose scientific and literary creations have survived to this day. In the fourteenth century, as in the thirteenth, Jewish education was a mixture of the traditional biblical and talmudic studies with the philosophy inherited from the Judeo-Arab period. To a lesser extent Jews studied Christian theology and scholastic subjects, as well as jurisprudence. Then, too, Italian humanism had spread to Spain, influencing the natural sciences, bourgeois rhetoric and poetry, and Jewish ways of thought. All these elements, together with certain parts of the Cabala which had become common property, were fused into a single body of culture which still requires careful study and analysis. Scholars and intellectuals once more began to compose verses and poems which were patterned after classic Hebreo-Arabic poetry and the work of contemporary Christian poets who lived at the courts of the kings and nobles or else banded together in the cities as groups of urban poets. The poetry of the age was characterized by excessive erudition and a bare trace of original inspiration. The poets excelled chiefly in criticism and satire.

Bonds of friendship extending beyond the boundaries of communities and countries were woven between men of wealth and culture. Benvenist de la Cavalleria in Saragossa, Joseph Orabuena in Tudela and Meir Alguadex in Toledo made their homes centers of culture for Spanish Jewry. The Halevi and Benveniste families in Burgos, the Matut family in Guadalajara, the de la Cavalleria and Alazar families in Saragossa formed and maintained friendships with the great scholars of Catalonia—friendships that were renewed whenever opportunity offered, at weddings and the like.

Simpler forms of religious piety were the rule among the artisans, who vied with one another in organizing societies of grave-diggers, "pursuers of righteousness," "alms-givers," "night vigilantes," and such others.

Signs of foreign influence could be detected in all circles. Alien concepts from the Roman and local codes and from the legal procedure of the Mediterranean merchants found their way into the constitutions of the aljamas and into the legal customs of the great Jewish merchants. Many availed themselves of the facilities of the Gentile courts. The references to these matters in the contemporary halakhic discussions are too scanty to reveal the full extent of the compromise with foreign doctrines. Nevertheless, there is much instructive material in this connection. Many rabbis based their decisions on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* and, above all, on custom and common sense. In their interpretation of the laws they tended to be lenient, a fact which aroused the ire and astonishment of the zealous and the pious. Those religious elements which sought truly and sincerely to reinvigorate Jewish life seem to have lacked the impetus that might have transformed the mysticism of the thirteenth century into a great movement for popular reform. The zealous were interested chiefly in safeguarding the religious tradition against an overly lenient interpretation of the commandments, and in setting up safeguards against the inroads of the destructive secular culture. They made no attempt to find a fundamental solution for social and ethical problems which alone could have provided a remedy for the ills of the times.²²

THE COMMUNAL LEADERSHIP OF RABBI ISAAC B. SHESHET AND HASDAI CRESCAS

The practical halakhic trend of the movement for a religious revival is reflected particularly in the activities of Rabbi Isaac b. Sheshet, whose name has been mentioned several times above. The vicissitudes of his life were typical of

his times. A member of an old and aristocratic Barcelona family, this scholar was obliged in 1372/73 to leave the city of his birth, either for economic reasons or because of his differences with the local oligarchy. In Saragossa he again revealed his capacity for fighting the ruling families. Finally, from 1385 until the catastrophe of 1391, he headed the *aljama* of Valencia, which was large in numbers but deficient in quality, and the other small and dispersed Jewish communities in the Kingdom of Valencia. His responsa from the period of his ministry in Spain were collected and edited by him in chronological order and supplemented with accompanying personal letters. This collection is a valuable source of legal documents and private correspondence which shed light on the culture of the period. His book enables us to picture Spanish Jewry as it was viewed by a critical halakhist. Naturally, it contains no detailed accounts of the many peculiar cases which did not come before Jewish judges and which were not relevant to talmudic law. R. Isaac's criticism of his contemporaries is very vehement at times, but he does not as a rule let himself go on the subject. For all that, it is clear from his letters that both rich and poor were lax in religious observance. Numerous cases of sexual transgression, acts of violence, denunciations and profanation of religion were brought before him. In localities which had no acknowledged religious authorities, the populace had little respect for religion, whether in the remote villages or in a "large" center like Saragossa. Religiously speaking, R. Isaac regarded Aragon and Valencia as arid and desert wastes, in comparison with a center of learning like Barcelona. He looked askance at the community of Majorca because of its alien customs. Yet even Barcelona itself provided no suitable environment for a man like him.

Owing to their personal character, R. Isaac's letters contain various references to the circumstances of the scholars. Rabbis received salaries under contracts that could be can-

celled, and changed posts a number of times during their lives. At times R. Isaac balances the advantages and disadvantages—both economic and spiritual—of this or that post. In his correspondence with his rabbinical colleagues he expresses, in high-flown language, sentiments of esteem and admiration, and even of love and cordial friendship. But a careful reading reveals that he held no very high opinion of their scholarship. R. Isaac finds “three or four errors and misconstructions on every page” of the talmudical interpretations of R. Solomon Zarfati of Majorca, while the latter’s rival in Majorca is criticized for rendering decisions on the basis of legal compendia without referring back to the Talmud itself, the procedure which most rabbis followed. R. Hayyim Galipapa, the rabbi of Pamplona, who had studied under the great teachers of Catalonia, was lenient in his interpretations of what was prohibited or permitted (but not to the point of doing violence to tradition, as certain thirteenth-century scholars and perhaps some of his own contemporaries had done). R. Hayyim makes the surprising statement that “in this age it is no longer necessary to avoid lenient decisions, because all the people are wise and prudent, learned in the Torah, well-versed in the commandments, and as full of *mitzvot* as a pomegranate.” Obviously, that generation deserved no such lavish praise. Isaac b. Sheshet, on the other hand, was extremely rigorous in applying the Halakhah. Of particular interest is his emphasis upon the superiority of the talmudic to philosophical teachings.

We should not [he declares] judge the laws and commandments of our Torah according to the views of the scientists and physicians, who, if they are to be believed—God forbid—assert that the Torah was not divinely revealed, the which they assume as a result of their false demonstrations. One who interpreted the laws relating to forbidden food according to the rules of the physicians would be richly rewarded by the butchers . . . But we,

for our part, should be loyal to our sages of blessed memory, even if they tell us that right is left, because they received the truth . . . and we should not believe the Greek and Arab scholars who speak only in accordance with their own assumptions and certain experiments.

This from the pen of R. Isaac, who himself was well-versed in contemporary philosophy and rhetoric (as was, incidentally, his brother, R. Cresques Judah Perfet). R. Isaac was friendly with intellectuals and learned men not only in Aragon, but with such famous Castilian scholars as Samuel Matut of Guadalajara, Don Solomon Halevi of Burgos, the poet R. Isaac Alhadib, and others. Fundamental objections to philosophy are found only in those of his letters written after the massacres of 1391, which fact is symptomatic of the change of heart that affected his entire generation.

To the extent that the rabbis were not men of independent means, they found it difficult to stand up to the “triflers and heretics who harass the rabbinate.” As we have seen, R. Isaac b. Sheshet’s public activities involved him in continuous conflicts with powerful oligarchical interests. His sympathies seem to have lain entirely with the underprivileged classes. In Saragossa the “little people” demonstrated in his honor when he was warring with the domineering members of the *aljama*. He gave the artisans of Murviedro, in the province of Valencia, express permission to work on the intervening semi-secular days of the holy days. In the following praises lavished by him and his brother upon R. Amram Efrati we may detect something of his own idealism:

He is armed with strength to go up to the breaches and to set up a barrier to guard the Commandments and the Torah, to level paths and to prop up falling booths. Those who hate the Lord and pervert justice flee from his admonitions . . . He sees the tears of the oppressed, consoles and refreshes the spirit of the innocent poor who sigh and groan . . . he takes a lash and stick to smite the

heads of the rebels, the wanton sinners, the frivolous ones. He did not refrain for fear . . . he is without parallel in the community.

Many of R. Isaac's comments reveal that he had worked out a complete political theory of his own. His frequent contacts with royal officials trained in the law, who applied to him for rulings on practical problems, obliged him to familiarize himself with general law. He saw eye to eye with his friend R. Hasdai Crescas, and when the latter succeeded him as rabbi of Saragossa, he sent him advice and a program (unfortunately no longer extant) by way of instructing him in communal leadership. In his opinion the local aljamas, each with its variant customs, were all-important, and he regarded it as the supreme merit of the Jewish communities of Aragon that they had no higher body with authority over the whole Jewish population. He made this point in connection with a controversy that had broken out regarding the chief rabbinate of France:

We have not [he wrote] attempted to lay down the law in any matter in this country, and to make any *takkanah* or *haskamah* (communal statute) for this country as a whole; but each and every community makes its own rules and regulations under royal patent . . . If Moses or Samuel were to arise now and make decrees or issue laws in any minor matter, they would be regarded as rebels against the State. Even rabbis are not permitted to impose the ban in this country except under royal patent.

Nevertheless, in practice, R. Isaac b. Sheshet himself issued instructions to the communities in his district which were couched in vigorous language. Unlike R. Hasdai Crescas, R. Isaac did not take part in affairs common to all the Jewish communities of Aragon. The *takkanoth* enacted in previous generations were sacrosanct in his sight, though they di-

gressed from the talmudic tradition, being a product of their times and expressing the customary political aims of the Middle Ages.

And if truly [he wrote] for our sins the numbers of the arrogant ones and those who have thrown off the yoke of the Fear of Heaven, and those who have “caused terror in the land of the living,” have increased, and flat-tery has spread even among the elect, those *takkanoth* have been weakened and their force has deteriorated; and if they were not needed by the whole community, it would be as well to abolish them.

R. Isaac obviously favored keeping the *takkanoth* in force because he considered them essential for the community as such; and he held that it was the duty of the rabbis, accordingly, to do everything possible to preserve them.

By virtue of his rabbinical authority, R. Isaac intervened in all matters relating to the administration of justice and the conduct of communal affairs, insofar as these came within the scope of the Halakhah (religious law). He also took the initiative in enforcing religious discipline and imposed his authority upon the powerful members of the community with all the legal and semi-legal means at his disposal. Indeed, this was how R. Isaac described the rabbinical function in his letter to R. Amram Efrati which has been quoted above. He praises R. Amram for not having hesitated to punish a certain prominent transgressor who refused to honor his oath to marry a certain woman, instructed a Christian notary to prepare certain commercial documents for him on the Sabbath, and attended the general court on the Sabbath day to superintend his private affairs. The transgressor was duly punished, thanks to the assistance given the rabbi by the royal officials. The *mukademin* of Teruel were extravagantly praised by R. Isaac for having “established justice in the land, and lashed corrupt fools with the whip, and cleansed God’s vineyard of thorns,” etc. These were not empty phrases. R. Isaac was

referring to the criminal laws, which the aljamas had sufficient authority to enforce.

On occasion, R. Isaac b. Sheshet himself exercised his rabbinical authority in a high-handed manner. While he was the rabbi of Valencia, an adulterer was brought before him whose “transgression brought shame upon the Jews and upon the religion of Moses.” R. Isaac ordered the man to be flogged, suggesting that the “blows should be heavy and laid on upon the naked flesh, with nothing in between to soften their force, and that he should be led through the whole Jewish quarter, or through the entrances to the quarter, being beaten all this time with a leather thong; thereafter ye may fetter him with iron chains until his uncircumcised heart submit and he repent his evil doing: everything is to be done as the judges may deem fit.” This sentence, which was carried out with the assistance of the Christian bailiff upon the advice of a rabbi of R. Isaac’s standing, was based on the primitive notions of the Germanic tribes, whose customs survived into the late Middle Ages. Cases actually involving the death sentence seem not to have been tried at the times and in the cities where R. Isaac served as rabbi. He was not opposed in principle to capital punishment; but when asked for a ruling in such cases he was very circumspect in his replies. While still in Saragossa, he was asked by Rabbi R. Menahem ha-Arukh of Salamanca (Castile) to comment on the case of two murderers who had killed a member of their community at the behest of a local Jewish judge. R. Isaac began his reply in the customary manner: “As you well know, we are no longer permitted to try criminal cases, because the criminal laws of the Torah have been abolished.” Nevertheless, he ruled:

If it be your desire to put them to death, you have the required authority . . . and if you wish to mitigate the sentence and cut off their right hands, you may do so. And if I were judging this case under royal patent, I would do so, and I would not modify the sentence in a

greater measure except by consent of the kindred of the slain.

Yet in conclusion, he declares:

that is how it appears to me in the abstract, since in this country we do not render verdicts in criminal cases, not even for cutting off hands and feet, for judgment belongs to the king . . . For, truly, as I write these words, my hand trembles and my knees knock against each other. Do not, therefore, rely upon my judgment in this matter.

R. Isaac's statements can only mean that the criminal jurisdiction allowed the Jews of Aragon was limited chiefly to cases of informing, and that even then authority was not definite and permanent, but depended upon the approval and good will of the king and his officials. It would seem, however, that R. Isaac took no part in such trials. There is nothing whatsoever either in his response or in the State records to indicate that he had anything to do with them. But he realized the dangers of denunciation (*malshinuth*) to the full. Though he was in close contact with the royal officials and gave them rulings on points of religious law, he rendered verdicts far more severe than those of R. Solomon Adret, a fact which suggests that the situation was exceedingly grave in his day. In the case of the adulterer in Valencia, R. Isaac wrote to R. Amram Efrati:

Clearly he should have paid sevenfold the amount that he did pay, and the truth is that it would have been better to judge him under the laws of Israel, were it probable that he would comply with the verdict, for there is reason to be wary of placing an Israelite in the power of Gentile judges, all the more so because he transgressed a law of our own Torah; for it is known that some of them covet Jewish money, and it is not advisable to afford them a pretext to inquire closely into our affairs.

Elsewhere, he wrote: “For as to provoking assaults and attacks upon the Jews, a little idle talk on the part of the judges of the land is more effective than our entire Torah.” “Every command given by the authorities to a Jew, though it be only a money fine, involves danger to life.”

In the responsa of R. Isaac b. Sheshet, there is only one case—involving an incident which bordered on his own jurisdiction—where he discusses the principles of criminal law in any detail. In doing so, he, like R. Solomon Adret, displayed great caution: it is obvious, however, that his comments reflect, not only religious tradition, but also his own personal character. The incident occurred at Teruel. A Jew had accused another Jew of theft before the *mukademin* of the community. When, after a long delay, no judgment was rendered, the plaintiff took the case to the municipal councillors. The defendant thereupon summoned him to appear before the Jewish court on a charge of defamation. Under the “privileges” granted the aljama, the penalty for informing was death. The *mukademin* of Teruel asked R. Isaac b. Sheshet for his opinion. R. Isaac began with a discussion of legal theory, in which it was obviously his intention to minimize the influence of Roman criminal law upon Jewish law. Nevertheless, he felt obliged to approve of certain foreign practices which had already been adopted by most of the Jewish communities: “But nowadays the Jewish court has no jurisdiction in criminal cases except under royal patent, and the verdict has to be justified in the sight of the Gentile judges, so that they may not suspect us of unrighteousness and injustice.” He agreed, therefore, to the acceptance of a confession from the accused even in criminal proceedings, “in order that the matter may be clarified from his own statement, when the evidence submitted is not clear.” R. Isaac also agreed that the informer should be allowed to engage an advocate to prepare his defense, or that a spokesman should be appointed to act for him, and that testimony should not be taken in the

presence of the parties involved. But he did not agree to the release of the informer from prison upon the presentation of satisfactory bail. Such is the gist of his remarks from the viewpoint of “Mosaic Law and Jewish custom,” which the *aljama* was empowered to apply by virtue of its “privilege.” Where, however, the laws of the land applied, R. Isaac was less willing to commit himself. “If taking a confession from the accused incurs the suspicions of an *inquisitio*, it seems to me that you are in a questionable position, in view of the law which forbids an *inquisitio* in Aragon.” He suggests as a solution the custom followed in Saragossa, but adds: “Do not, however, rely on me in this matter . . . ask the Gentile scholars.” Likewise, in regard to testimony taken in the absence of the accused, he wrote:

As to whether the “document under the seal” (*privilegio*) of his Royal Highness suffices for this or not, inquire of the Gentile scholars. . . . But if there are any reservations in Gentile law or practice about permitting a suspect to bring litigation against another . . . and if it involves suspicion of *inquisitio* in instituting a lawsuit (*proces*) without a plaintiff . . . seeing that your privilege empowers you to act according to Mosaic and Jewish law—for as to provoking assaults, etc. [see above] . . . I am unable to offer you any counsel.

Thus, after this long discussion of Jewish and Gentile law, R. Isaac came to the conclusion that the case under review was not one of delation, and that the accused, inasmuch as he had just cause to bring his litigation before a Gentile tribunal, did not merit the death penalty.

If the person in question was overwrought at his sisters robbery, and the possibility existed that the *gizbar* [i.e., the bailiff responsible for executing the sentences of the Jewish court] was unduly delaying, he might [justly] claim that the king’s judgment should be given by the municipal councillors and not by the *gizbar* and *muka-*

demin, and so he would not be an informer in the proper sense of the word . . . nevertheless, since the consequences of his act have caused harm and expense to the community . . . the person in question cannot be acquitted of having disturbed and injured the public welfare . . . and he deserves to be punished as the court sees fit, whether by flogging, excommunication or bans, or by financial penalties and prohibitions . . .

Such was the extent of R. Isaac's discretion and personal modesty.

A learned friend of R. Isaac b. Sheshet, R. Isaac, the son of Rabbi Vidal de Tolosa, who was then living in Alcolea de Cinca, quarreled with the members of his aljama over the assessment of taxes and was maligned before the countess. This act of informing might have had fatal consequences. Nevertheless, R. Isaac b. Sheshet advised his friend to withdraw from the dispute.

In your kindness, and out of deference for your holy ancestors and your love of me, make room for peace . . . As to the informer, heed my counsel and may God be with you: If no injury has as yet befallen you, turn a deaf ear and pay the matter no attention. "Resign thyself unto the Lord and wait patiently for him" (see Gittin 7). Frequent the house of study mornings and evenings, and these things shall pass away of themselves. Be one of those of whom it is said: "His friends are like the sun as he rises in his might" (Judges 7.31).

Elsewhere he wrote:

Every wise and prudent man should seek peace and pursue it, and if thy adversaries refuse to be reconciled with thee, do not strive with them. Resign thyself unto the Lord and wait patiently for Him.²³

Of even greater magnitude than R. Isaac b. Sheshet was his old companion, R. Hasdai Crescas. Although he played a

larger and more influential role in public affairs than R. Isaac, only a few of his responsa dealing with the practical application of rabbinic law have come down to us. There is reason to believe that even before the disasters of 1391 he was actively engaged in replying to the scurrilous anti-Jewish trials and accusations current at the time. Of all his polemical writings against Christianity, however, there remains only one small tract, written during the period of the massacres and conversions. Shortly before his death he summarized his philosophic views in another small but very important book. Even before the catastrophe of 1391 he was the acknowledged political and spiritual leader of Aragonese Jewry, as is attested to by the document proclaiming his appointment in 1390 as supreme judge of all delation cases, in which he is referred to as surpassing all other Jews in Aragon, “not only in knowledge of the laws of Moses, but in power of reasoning.” He was on intimate terms with the royal House, especially during the reign of John I and his wife Violante, and associated with Christian poets and writers. In or about 1389, after he had been publicly active in Barcelona for nearly twenty years and had achieved prominence as a spokesman for the entire Jewish population of Aragon, he was called to the rabbinate of Saragossa. The invitation was probably extended by the leaders of that community, Benvenist de la Cavalleria and Alazar Golluf, although in the years to come he neither showed them any favoritism nor hesitated to rebuff them. Under unknown circumstances he wrote to these two men—the most powerful figures of the age in their community—that he was still undecided whether to “attempt to sweeten their bitterness and win them to do his will,” or whether to “humble to dust” the “vulgar-minded” and “high and mighty.” This is the very tone used by the pious people of the previous century to defy their aristocratic contemporaries. The powers granted to Hasdai Crescas in 1390 as supreme judge of all defamation cases went far be-

yond what any other Jewish scholar or courtier in Aragon had ever enjoyed. Jewish public opinion appears to have agreed with the royal family that so sincere a philosopher and political leader could be safely entrusted to wield this dangerous weapon against the internal enemies of the Jews. Even today Hasdai Crescas is known to us as one of the few Jewish scholars of the late Middle Ages who ventured to explore new paths in philosophy, and whose scholastic deductions resound with a strain of gentle and profound piety. The archives of the royal chancery reveal him as having been an energetic statesman who did not hesitate to impose even the death penalty. As we shall see, however, his greatness reveals itself after the crisis of 1391.²⁴

ANTI-JEWISH TRENDS AND ACCUSATIONS OF HOST DESECRATION AMONG THE CHRISTIANS

The above sketch of the inner life of the Jewish communities of Aragon reveals something of the dangers that threatened them from without. In the latter half of the fourteenth century, antisemitism did not assume the same crudely primitive form in Aragon that it did in Castile. There was no secular literature in Aragon at the time to serve as a vehicle for hatred, nor was the Jewish question frequently discussed by the Cortes. The problem of Jewish participation and political influence in the administration of state affairs practically did not exist. In the legislation that took place in Aragon between 1348 and 1391, the question of usury is dealt with only once, a clear indication that the issue was not considered to be of burning importance. But in the legislative codes of the municipalities, as in Barcelona, there was a noticeable tendency to restrict the economic activities of the Jews and to reduce them to a lower social status. Between urban Christian intellectuals and Jews of similar cultural and social status, ties of friendship were formed in various ways. As in Germany at that period, antisemitism was spread

among the urban lower classes: the artisans who aspired to wrest control of the municipalities, and the mendicant friars who mingled with the poor. With the occurrence of natural disaster, like outbreaks of plague or famine, there were recurrent attacks upon the Jews of Majorca, Perpignan, and Barcelona in the middle 1370's. The struggle between the Estates, the factional and familial conflicts in the cities of Aragon, and the increasing tension between villages and cities would have sufficed in themselves to create mounting ill will against the Jews. Nevertheless, in spite of all this abundance of explosive material, it is doubtful whether any conflagration would have broken out in Aragon had not the incendiary spark come from Castile.²⁵

There was at this time no systematic anti-Jewish religious propaganda in Aragon. It was only at the close of the epoch that the learned Franciscan scholar, Francesc Eximeniç, began to write his great books which contain much polemical material against Judaism. It would seem that both the Franciscan and Dominican movements had lost much of their initial impetus, while the Inquisition, although it continued in existence, lacked the material to produce the accusations and great trials such as those which had devastated Jewish communities early in the fourteenth century. True, a school of inquisitors arose in Aragon whose harshness and intriguing embittered the lives of both Jews and Christians; but their methods were not calculated to lead to the wholesale destruction of Aragonese Jewry. The head of this school was the notorious inquisitor, Nicolaus Eymerich, whose innovation it was that not only backsliding converts and Jews who encouraged them were subject to the authority and supervision of inquisitional court, but also any Jew who sinned against the faith in the One God, Creator of the Universe, which is common to all religions. On the basis of the inquiry into the Talmud held at the time by Pope Gregory IX, Eymerich sought to extend his jurisdiction to those Jews who violated

the laws of their own religion, though those acts might not be sinful for Christians. He was chiefly concerned with the practice of black magic, such as the conjuring up of demons by the burning of incense, and the like—practices then common among both Jews and Christians. Some details are available about a trial held in 1371 in which the defendant, a Jewish notable of Barcelona by the name of Astruc de Piera, was accused of conjuring up demons and eliciting replies from them. Following disputes on matters of jurisdiction, which were even brought before the pope, the accused was sentenced to make public abjuration in the cathedral of Barcelona, swearing never to repeat the offenses, and to spend the rest of his life in prison. There was a similar trial that same year against a Jewish convert by the name of Ramón de Tárrega.

In a fragment of a diary kept by one of the inquisitors of the period, there is a list of various charges of heresy against Jews who were brought before him. One Jew was brought to trial for having said that when a man dies his soul leaves him, but returns to the corpse in the grave eight days later and there remains with him. Another Jew had asserted that after the last judgment, hell would be abolished, and that God would have mercy upon all, at the request of one of the saints. An old woman had made an image of wax and punctured its heart with a needle so as to bewitch a man and make him return home from a distant country. Such cases indicate that the inquisitors did not have more important duties and issues to deal with. Nevertheless, their actions sufficed to harass the Jews thoroughly. One of the requests which the drafters of the *takkanoth* of 1354 proposed to submit to the pope was that

he [the pope] see to it that heresy inquisitions among the Jews be limited to the investigation of offenses common to all religions, such as atheism or the denial of Divine Revelation; . . . but insofar as there is a dispute

between religions, even if a Jew confirms a Christianas charge of heresy against another Jew, the Jew should not be charged with heresy, because a Jew is not guilty of heresy when he does or thinks what is right according to his own religion; let such a person be punished by the secular authorities, either by death or mutilation, but not by the inquisitors.

Jews were also charged with having blasphemed against Christianity, and there were, of course, cases of converted Jews who had returned to their ancestral faith. At the time, however, none of this gave rise to great public trials, as had been the case in the early part of the fourteenth century, and penalties severer than fines or imprisonment were not imposed. On several occasions Pedro IV intervened in behalf of the Jews, while the Jews themselves were able to curry favor with the inquisitors by means of gifts and the like. Officially, no grave danger from the Church existed for the Jewish population as a whole.²⁶

The priests of the cathedral of Gerona played a little game of their own. There was an old custom in that city, dating from the thirteenth century, of making minor forays into the Jewish quarter at Eastertide, and throwing stones and combustibles from the roof of the bishop's palace on to the Jewish houses. Our information about that custom is derived from a letter addressed by the king in 1368 to the bishop of Gerona demanding that he abolish it. "If you and the other priests," wrote the king, "had mercy and love, as you preach from your pulpits, you would not destroy the Jews, who are our own personal property and treasure. If they belonged to you, you would not permit them to be harmed."²⁷ The religious problem on principle was not the chief factor either in the attacks of the priests or in the king's intercession on behalf of the Jews.

Religious hatred had deeper roots in the popular superstitions brought from northern to southern Europe. One

such superstition had it that the Jews liked to buy or to steal the consecrated host in order to desecrate it. This superstition was credited not only by simple folk, but was current in the highest circles. The trial of a Jew from Barcelona on such a charge in 1367 has already been mentioned. The parties responsible for holding that trial were the young infante Don Juan and his advisers, who were distinguished jurists, and two prominent citizens of Barcelona, who were co-opted as members of the committee of inquiry. But Pedro IV himself seems for a time to have believed that vile aspersion. The king's chief officer, the bailiff-general of Catalonia, did, however, take steps to prevent attacks upon the Jews by the incited and fanatical mob in connection with the trial.

Ten years later, in 1377, the same libel was revived, in another form, in the cities of Teruel and Huesca. On that occasion, again, the initiative was taken by Don Juan and his advisers. Once more a Christian thief was arrested on a charge of stealing consecrated hosts and selling them to Jews. Several Jews were tortured and burnt to death in Huesca. Others were brought before the court of the archbishop of Saragossa. The official presiding officer at the trial was B. de Ponte, one of the infante's advisers, who was then governor-general of Aragon. Pedro IV, who happened to be visiting Barcelona when the trial began, wrote at once to his son asking him to prevent attacks upon the Jews, and expressed the suspicion that some of the infante's advisers were interested not in justice, but in the ruin of the Jews. The king advised his son to follow the course he himself had taken in 1367. He addressed himself to the infante's advisers in the same terms: "We protected the Jews in time of war; he [the infante] can and must protect them in time of peace." The king added that if they persisted in their present course, the Jews would ultimately leave the royal domain and settle in the districts under the jurisdiction of the Church and the

aristocracy. Don Juan, who at the time had given orders to compel the Jews to enter into religious disputations with an apostate, replied to his father in a pietistic tone that it was his duty to avenge the death of Jesus. The king his father replied that the trial was designed rather to ruin the Jews than to promote justice and good Catholic faith. He asked for the records of the trial, and found that the Jews had confessed under torture and later retracted their confessions. Moreover, oral reports reached him that the trial had been improperly conducted: documents submitted by the defense had been burnt; the king had been provided only with brief summaries of the evidence; the accused had been tortured illegally in order to elicit accusations against others; the accused had been denied the benefit of counsel and had not been furnished with copies of the testimony; nor had witnesses for the defense been called at the times specified by law. The king was also informed that a certain apostate had beguiled the Jews into admitting a crime they had not committed. Finally, the king sent commissioners to Saragossa to observe the proceedings at the trial. The outcome of the trial is not known. Those of the accused who survived were probably set free. Most of them seem to have been humble and obscure men. There are no references whatever to these incidents in the contemporary Hebrew literature.²⁸

It is not likely that Pedro IV altogether disbelieved the slander. He had, however, a practical stake in the existence of the Jewish communities. He needed their money, particularly as he was then preparing to make war upon Sardinia. The young prince continued to harass the Jews, to the grief of the king and queen. There is no doubt that the aging king at times harbored unworthy suspicions of the Jews. It is thus we must interpret the obscure events of 1383, concerning which full details are not yet available. On March 14, 1383, the king commanded the Jewish communities of Barcelona, Gerona and Perpignan to prepare at once a very exact trans-

lation of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* into Catalan, and to send it to him in a sealed packet; this they must do on pain of forfeiting his royal favor. This command was probably instigated by some defamation of the Jewish law in general or of the works of Maimonides in particular. During the following weeks there were protracted negotiations between the government and representatives of all the Jewish communities of the kingdom, who were headed by R. Hasdai Crescas and R. Jonah Desmaestre. The communities paid the king enormous sums, which they had to raise by means of loans, and in return received, late in April 1383, certain new privileges, some of which were characteristic of the times. The communal leaders were granted the new powers for prosecuting informers which were discussed above. Converted Jews were forbidden to enter the Jewish quarter, to preach public sermons there, or to engage Jews in arguments about religion.

In September 1383, the royal chancery ordered legal proceedings to be instituted against the Jews of Lerida, who were accused of having bought consecrated bread. In this case a noble, the count of Urgel, was the most zealous prosecutor. The king wrote to this prince that the Jews had explained to him that "logically, such a thought could not and must not occur to a Jew," and asked him to exercise much care in proceeding with his investigations and examinations because the trial might lead to the destruction of all the Jewish communities of the kingdom. The Jewish representatives, who were headed—according to the official records—by R. Jonah Desmaestre, and also assuredly by R. Hasdai Crescas, used all their powers of persuasion and all their financial resources to stop the trial. Three years later these communal representatives had not yet been reimbursed for the sums they advanced for the public good.²⁹

In regard to all these trials, it is probable that the king himself felt none too certain that there might not be a grain

of truth in the charges preferred against this peculiar people; his aspirations to enlightenment, which attracted Jewish scholars and scientists to his court, did not stand him in good stead in this matter. His suspiciousness and cruelty both encouraged the external forces of darkness, and also placed in the hands of the Jews—by way of their anti-dilation privileges—a bloodstained sword for defending themselves against their internal and external enemies. All these phenomena were very different from the ways of a heroic and upright king like James I. But, for the moment, realistic considerations still prompted the government of Aragon to safeguard the existence of the Jewish community.

THE EARLY YEARS OF JOHN I

When the infante Juan ascended the throne as John I (1387–1396), he adopted the same realistic principles and policy. But unlike his hard-hearted father, John was soft as a reed. A more determined ruler might perhaps have protected the Jews against the disaster that was to befall them during his reign. Indeed, when he ascended the throne, John no longer listened to the libels he himself had encouraged in his youth. He and Doña Violante kept up the same friendly relations with Jewish scholars as they and their father had always maintained. In very close contact with the king and queen were R. Hasdai Crescas, some cartographers from Majorca, and a Jewish astrologer by the name of Cresquee de Vivers. The treatment accorded to Alazar Golluf, a native of Saragossa, was typical. Since 1383 he had been in the service of Don Juan and Doña Violante as an official and representative of the treasurer (*dispenser*) of the infantes. After John's coronation Golluf received the title of "director of the queen's treasury" (*regent la tresoreria de la senyora reyna*), but in point of fact he—a Jew—held the post of the queen's treasurer, something for which there had been no precedent in a hundred years. It was probably to this fact that the theolo-

gian Eximeniç was referring when he questioned in his great book whether or not it was lawful for a Christian king to employ a Jewish treasurer. The accounts kept by Golluf have unfortunately not been preserved among the numerous records of the *Patrimonio Real* in Barcelona; possibly, however, the records of the Jewish official were intentionally destroyed after his death.

Alazar Golluf was loyal to his people and his religion—ostensibly at least. But his son Isaac was converted to Christianity a few months after his father's death in August 1389. Before his conversion Isaac obtained from the king a confirmation of all his rights to inherit his father's estate in the event that he carried out his intention of adopting Christianity. This indicates that the old law, providing that an apostate forfeits his inheritance rights or that they pass to the State, was still in force. Isaac's conversion led to bitter quarrels between him and his brother, his mother, and his wife, who demanded a divorce. It was rumored that members of his family intended to poison the apostate. R. Hasdai Crescas, who was called to act as arbitrator in the matter of the inheritance rights, received a short and peremptory command not to render a decision without the approval of the queen. This incident is interesting from various points of view. The apostate, who took the Christian name of Juan Sánchez de Calatayud, was the grandfather of Gabriel Sánchez, one of the most distinguished officials of King Ferdinand the Catholic. Juan Sánchez's example was followed by a number of others during the period of persecution that was already casting its shadow ahead. Sánchez was one of the few—he had a counterpart in Castile in the person of Samuel Abravanel (Juan Sánchez de Sevilla: see vol. I, 378 and 451, n. 69)—who seem to have anticipated that trouble lay ahead and saved themselves while it was still possible to arrange such matters conveniently and advantageously. A new type of apostate now emerged. Previously, Jewish apostates had entered their

new faith as penitents, become monks, and appeared in public chiefly as persecutors of and missionaries to their former co-religionists. Now, change of religion was prompted by political considerations, serving as an “admission ticket” to a world that was wholly secular and to a career in the civil and political bureaucracy.³⁰

In May 1391, less than a fortnight before the great storm broke in Seville (Andalusia), the archbishop of Tarragona instituted a trial against “several books by Rabi Mosse (Maimonides) in which, so it is said, there are several errors concerning the Christian religion.” Don Martin, the young brother of John I, took the matter in hand and proposed to finish the trial in Barcelona, but Queen Violante asked him to choose a locality where there was no *aljama* belonging to the royal treasury. The queen gave as her reason that the “end of the trial may cause grave injury (*gran escandol*) to our Jewish community in Barcelona—should the trial be concluded in Barcelona—because the populace, which hates them exceedingly, would then hate them all the more.”³¹ The times were such that religious fanaticism was the strongest and most compelling of forces.

DESTRUCTION AND CONVERSIONS (1391–1412)

CASTILE

In 1378 the archdeacon of Ecija, Ferrant Martínez, began to deliver public harangues in Seville against the Jews. He urged that their twenty-three magnificent synagogues should be razed to the ground, and that they should be confined to their own quarter so as to prevent them from having any intercourse with Christians. He also enjoined the rural population of Andalusia not to allow Jews to live in their midst. When, after the death of the archbishop in 1390, Martinez became the administrator of the diocese, he called upon the Christians to demolish all synagogues in their district. Furthermore, ancient privileges notwithstanding, he baptized all

slaves owned by Jews, and summoned Jewish tax farmers to appear before the ecclesiastical court. Fragments of his sermons which have come to hand are permeated with religious fanaticism and vulgar antisemitism. In his sermons Martinez vaguely hinted that, according to his information, the king and queen would not punish those who attacked the Jews. On several occasions the Jews appealed to the royal court for help, and finally they brought suit against Martinez publicly. The government's orders were of no avail; it is possible that they were none too stringent. Martinez replied that it was incumbent upon him not to fail in his Christian duty.¹ The government's attitude was typically medieval: the Jews had to be protected for material reasons, law and order had to be maintained, and the prestige of the government upheld; but, in the face of a popular religious movement, there was nothing to be done except wait and see how matters would fall out and how Divine Providence would tip the scale. It is noteworthy that the disorders broke out in the days of interregnum. When King John I of Castile died in 1390, the crown prince was still a minor. The regency which administered the government in behalf of the boy-king was not strong enough to hold the various rebellious forces in check.

Our knowledge of what happened in Castile is derived only from odds and ends of documents and fragmentary tales. On June 4, 1391 (1 Tammuz 5151)

the Lord bent His bow like an enemy against the community of Seville . . . they set fire to its gates and killed many of its people; but most changed their religion, and some of the women and children were sold to the Moslems . . . and many died to sanctify His Name, and many violated the holy covenant.

This is how R. Hasdai Crescas tells the story in a letter that will be considered elsewhere in this book. There is but little to add to his narration. The synagogues were converted into

churches and the Jewish quarter was settled by Christians within a short time.

The storm that broke in Seville passed over all the other communities of Andalusia, and extended to New and Old Castile. The disorders took varied forms, but the outcome was always the same. Of the community of Cordova a contemporary elegist laments: “Great and small did not remain in it who had not changed their religion.” In Toledo, on June 20 (17 days in the month of Tammuz) R. Judah, a grandson of R. Asher ben Yehiel, his family and students died the death of martyrs; many prominent members of the community suffered the same fate. However, there were many *conversos* whose destiny and that of their descendants will be discussed in later chapters. The famous synagogues of Toledo fell into Christian hands, and some were destroyed. Moslems also participated in the riots. In Madrid most of the Jews were killed or baptized. The municipal authorities cast all the blame upon the “little people” (*pueblo menudo*), who continued to loot in the vicinity for a whole year. As for the city of Cuenca, it is clear that the heads of the municipality were responsible for the destruction of the Jewish community. The municipal councillors forced the Jews to convert; officials and notables assembled to the ringing of church bells with the object of looting and destroying the Jewish quarter. On June 16 the government, which then had its seat in Segovia, sent communications to Burgos—and undoubtedly to the other cities in Castile—regarding the assaults upon the Jews. Therein it was stated that in Seville and Cordova Jews had been killed, despoiled and forced to change their religion because the arch-deacon of Ecija had incited the “little people” (*gente menuda*), who lacked understanding, were not concerned for the harm done to the king’s interests, did not respect the king’s justice, and had no fear of God in their hearts; that the government would not tolerate such shameful deeds because hitherto the kings had always protected the Jews, such being the command

of the Catholic Church itself; proclamation must be made forthwith to the effect that none venture to molest the Jews and that all outbreaks be suppressed at their source. In point of fact the government was not able to protect the Jews even in Segovia. In Burgos (as appears from records of the following year) lowborn rioters attacked the Jewish quarter several days after the proclamations were issued. The Jews left their fortress (which during the Civil War had proved impregnable until the most advanced military techniques were used against it) and took refuge in the homes of Christians situated below the fortress. Some of the Jews of Burgos were baptized, and a whole quarter inhabited by apostates (*conversos*) soon sprang up. Other Jews in Burgos, who remained loyal to their faith, asked for and received from the government a written guarantee of political and economic protection. They were allowed to return to their homes and resume their former lives. There can be no doubt but that the number of these faithful ones was small. The same elegist mentioned above refers to the Burgos community in the following terms:

Burgos is battered by the rage of the mob;
 Evil of heart, they topple her towering pride.
 Lo, she has left the Lord, like a faithless wife (Num. 5.11
 ff.),
 Choosing a base man, casting the honored aside.
 Her thighs have rotted, her belly swelled, and she
 Became a curse for a people once at peace.
 Mised, her righteous men mislead; Her prince,
 O woe! is now a foe. Without surcease
 Her captains—Jeroboam-like—ensnare the folk.
 Upon the dead they call: not one will turn
 To the Eternal. Levites sing of their desires;
 Servants of God, the living God they spurn.

There could be no more painful evidence of the disloyalty of the leaders and scholars of Burgos, including members of the Halevi family. In the light of this moral deterioration,

there is no need to enter into lengthy explanations as to why such large and powerful communities did not think of taking up arms in their own defense.

When the disorders ended, the government sent commissions of inquiry, and fines were levied upon the municipalities to cover the losses caused by the riots to the royal revenues. To seize the rioters themselves was all but impossible. In every locality noble families and even priests had been involved in the crimes. A Jewish notable of Soria by the name of Samuel Bienveniste, who had settled in Saragossa in the 1380's but continued to visit his native town from time to time, found refuge in a castle belonging to the bishop of the district of Osma. In mid-July the queen wrote to the bishop of Osma and the archbishop of Toledo asking them to arrange for the safe return of her liege Bienveniste to Saragossa. The bishop, however, refused the queen's request, replying that, owing to the disturbed conditions, he was then unable to visit his castles and that, should the Jew be converted to Christianity in the meantime, Her Majesty would certainly not be displeased. Here we have an illustration of the attitude of high church dignitaries towards the events of those days.²

ARAGON

Early in July the first news of the disturbances in Castile reached Aragon. Signs of widespread agitation were immediately evident in various parts of Catalonia. On July 9, the day on which the community of Valencia was destroyed, Dona Maria, the wife of the infante Don Martin, wrote to officials at Montblanch (near Barcelona): she had heard about the attacks upon the Jews of Seville, and now reports had reached her that intractable men in Catalonia, who feared neither God nor the king's justice had dared to injure the Jews in word and deed. The princess declared that such a state of affairs would not be tolerated. The Jews were the king's "treasure," and it was one's official duty to

protect them. There are grounds for assuming that the king had previously sent similar instructions. In a letter dated July 13, he ordered the governor of Roussillon not to leave Perpignan, or to return there immediately and remain there until the Jew-baiting excitement and threatening populace had calmed down.³

In the meantime, the community of Valencia had become the next victim. Organized bands of rioters from Castile incited the troops encamped in the harbor who were about to sail with the infante Don Martin to Sicily. The municipal council negotiated with the heads of the Christian artisans' guilds and demanded that they keep their members in check. Gallows for hanging rioters were set up near the Jewish quarter and guards were stationed there. On July 9, a gang of youths appeared in front of the Jewish quarter shouting: "The archdeacon is coming! The Jews must choose between baptism and death!" Several of the hoodlums pushed their way inside. Thereupon the Jews closed the gates behind them so as to keep out the rest of the rabble. Those who remained outside began to shout that the Jews were going to kill their friends. The infante and the municipal councillors came to the Jewish quarter and commanded the Jews to open the gate. The order was not obeyed. A few Jews had already slipped out to the port and were sailing away in boats. Finally the Christians broke down the gate. About 250 Jews were killed. Some were baptized by force, and others took refuge in the homes of Christians. Among those who fled from Valencia was R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet. The next day an attempt was made upon the Moslem quarter, but the fear of reprisals from Moslems living in the villages of the Kingdom of Valencia made the rioters desist. The infante Don Martin now made good his threat, and ordered one of the Castilians who had looted the Moslem quarter to be hanged. The Moslems were a more important political factor than the Jews because there were those in the neighboring Moslem kingdoms who might have avenged their deaths. When the

king, who was then in Saragossa, received his brothers first report of the events in Valencia, he replied immediately (on July 16), sharply censuring the others negligent behavior. “Had you,” he wrote, “acted with the strictness and severity called for by the nature of the crime and the contempt shown for our chastisement—especially when so abominable a crime was committed in front of you who represent our person, who are our brother and the highest officer of our realm—you would have put to the sword or hanged 300 or 400 men during these riots (*avalot*) against the Jews.”

These remarks are quoted from a long letter written by the king to his brother. Never before, probably, had a Gentile king written so resentfully about crimes committed against the Jews. But no action was taken. And, indeed, how could anything be done? The aristocratic families of knights and citizens whose members had participated in the riots were powerful enough to prevent the holding of any legal inquiries. There was even a suspicion that some of the *jurados* (city fathers) had been involved in the outrage, and that the rioters had had orders “from above.” At first the city fathers felt uneasy at having to explain matters to the king. But the occurrence soon came to be regarded as a miracle. So many Jews sought baptism that the supply of holy anointing oil in the church soon gave out. Then the miracle happened: the empty vessels filled up of themselves from within. Thus numerous legends were soon woven. Among the converted were numbered many Jews of high standing and reputation of whom there was reason to boast. In the same letter of July 16, the king gave orders, *inter alia*, that Jews who had found shelter in the homes of their Christian acquaintances were not to be baptized by force, but were to be removed to places of safety. He forbade the conversion of synagogues into churches. It was his firm intention to rehabilitate the Valencia community, and he ordered a list to be made of the looted property.

But all these demands arrived too late. The storm spread

over the whole Kingdom of Valencia. Small Jewish communities are said to have been converted *en masse*. Only in the city of Murviedro did the local Jews find refuge in the fortress, thanks to the royal commandant.⁴

In the Balearic islands the situation was still worse because of the prevailing tension between the villagers (*forenses*) and the municipal council of the capital city of Majorca. On July 10, the governor gave orders that the Jews were to be protected from the populace, which was preparing to attack them. The governor had the Jews evacuated from the villages to the city. The disturbances began on August 2. Three hundred Jews were killed and 800 escaped to the fortress. Among the martyrs were R. Vidal Ephraim Gerondi. There is reason to believe that the baptisms began on the same day. Many Jews escaped to Africa by sea, either immediately or during the following weeks, even though on August 7 the governor had forbidden the ships to sail so that no one might slip away secretly. The government obviously intended to protect the Jews, but it did not want the wealthy ones to flee. The governor summoned the bailiffs (royal officials stationed in the villages) for consultation; but several of them, abetted by the bailiff of Majorca, did not put in an appearance. The bailiff did not escape his just deserts. In January 1392 he was executed by order of the king as one of the parties responsible for the disturbances.

The government felt obliged to act firmly and energetically because the disorders did not affect the Jews alone. The riots were apt to develop into a general revolt of the peasants. In compliance with the peasants' demands, various decrees were issued at the end of September, some of them affecting the Jews adversely. Villagers' debts to Jews, including converted Jews, were cancelled. *Conversos* were forbidden to carry arms or to sail to Moslem lands. The peasants' primary demand was simple and explicit: the Jews must choose be-

tween death and conversion. It was explained to the peasants that Christianity did not desire the death of sinners, but wished to divert them into the right path by gentle persuasion. Early in October the peasants demanded even more emphatically that the Jews should be evicted from the fortresses and forced to choose between death and conversion. It would appear that, in that month in October, large numbers of Jews became converts. A list has been preserved of the names of 111 Jewish householders who were baptized at the time. Among them were the famous cartographer, Judah Cresques, whose wife remained faithful to Judaism, and Isaac Nifoci, the aged astronomer, who, however, availed himself of the first opportunity to renounce his conversion and emigrate to the Holy Land. Not until early in 1392 did the government regain control of the situation.⁵

In the meantime, tension was increasing in Catalonia. Fearing attacks and further incitement, the Jews of Tarragona fled to the local fortress and informed the king in writing of their action. The king replied in a letter dated July 24, in which he placed the Jews under the special protection of the archbishop and of the royal and municipal officers. He directed that the rioters be dealt with as violators of the royal protection and rebels against the State. Writing on the same day to Tortosa, the king spoke not only of the defense, but also of the restoration of the Jewish community there, which would indicate that it had already been affected by the disorders. On July 26, in a rhetorical missive composed by the poet Bernard Metge, the king thanked the city fathers of Barcelona for having stopped certain criminals from storming the Jewish quarter. In this letter the king praised Barcelona for upholding its well-known loyalty to him, and promised to heed its advice and leave Saragossa, in order to be present at the trial of those accused of “loathsome instigation and criminal and inhumane assault” upon the Jews in Valencia. Owing to the heat and in the hope that

his brother, Don Martin, would in the meantime punish the criminals as they deserved, the king postponed his journey until the fifteenth of August. So well aware was he of the gravity of the situation that he postponed his coronation to the following year.⁶

News of the destruction of the Jewish community of Valencia on July 9 reached the municipal council of Barcelona on the same day. On July 22, the *ciutadans honrats* (the patricians), the “men of the sea,” and even the artisans decided to remain with their arms in the town hall so as to prevent rioting. But, as was the case in Valencia, there were troops stationed in the port who were about to embark for Sicily. From Valencia came a boat with fifty Castilians who, having murdered and looted there and in Seville, now proposed to carry on their activities in Barcelona. The occasion for the attack was the news that the Jewish quarter of Majorca had been taken. On Saturday, August 5 (4 days in Ellul) about 100 Jews were killed in Barcelona, while another 100 took refuge in the “New Fortress” (*castrum novum*). The rioters burnt the gates of the quarter, set fire to the notarial archives, and looted all that day and night. The municipal council arrested the Castilians and condemned ten of them to death by hanging. But on the following Monday the “little people” (*populus minutus*)—port workers and fishermen in particular—came out with the slogan: “Long live the king and the people! The fat ones wish to destroy the little people!” The mob battered down the doors of the jail and stormed the New Fortress. Of what followed, Hasdai Crescas wrote:

And they fought the Jews that were in the fortress with bows and catapults, and beat and struck them there in the tower. Many sanctified the Holy Name, my only son among them, an innocent lamb; him have I offered up as a burnt offering, I shall vindicate God’s judgment against me, and I shall be comforted with the goodness

of his portion and the sweetness of his fate. Many slaughtered themselves and some threw themselves from the tower . . . and some went out and were martyred in the street. . . .

Simultaneously, the peasants marched on the city. They burnt the bailiff's records, seized the castle of the royal vicar, dragged out the Jews and bade them choose death or conversion. Thus they looted and killed until the end of the week. In all about 400 Jews were killed.

And all the others changed their religion. Only a few fled to the places of the nobles . . . a child might count them . . . but they were notables. And for our many sins there is not this day a single Israelite to be found in Barcelona.

One of the elegists, while exposing the shame of his age, wrote about the “Holy” community of Barcelona, where R. Solomon Adret and R. Nissim Gerondi taught in their time:

For Barcelona moan! Her pride is overthrown.
Sew thee sack to cover thee, and all thy jewelry
Fling away. Alas for that pure maid who now has strayed,
Raised her skirts and stripped herself for all to see!

A list of the *conversos* of Barcelona, who later submitted legal claims for the return of their looted possessions, contains the names of dignitaries and aristocrats, talmudic scholars, physicians, wealthy merchants, and former leaders of the community who had enjoyed the friendship of R. Isaac b. Sheshet and R. Hasdai Crescas. The names of only a few artisans appear in the list, but this does not necessarily mean that only a small number were converted, as they may not have submitted many claims.

The king received his first report about what had happened in Barcelona only on August 8, and he now resolved to set out directly for that city. He asked the head of the Order of

the Knights of Montesa to accompany him on his journey with a military escort. On August 12, 16 and 18, the queen wrote to the cathedral priests and educated citizens of Barcelona commending to their care the son and other members of the family of Hasdai Crescas who, so she had been informed, had found temporary shelter in the homes of these dignitaries. All the queen's letters reached their destination after the riots.⁷

With the destruction of the Barcelona community, the fate of the Jews of Gerona was also sealed. On August 6, the *jurados* of Gerona were informed by the municipality of Barcelona of the disorders that had occurred in that city on the previous day. Three days later the *jurados* closed a lane leading into the Jewish quarter that was kept open in normal times. The principal outbreak took place on August 10. In their official report the town councillors of Gerona laid the blame squarely on the peasants. It was they who had set fire to one of the gates of the Jewish quarter, and then broke into it, looting and killing despite the resistance put up by royal and municipal officials.

In the city of Gerona, where learning and humility were joined in one place, the rabbis of the community publicly sanctified the Holy Name. But few of the people changed their religion, and most took shelter in the homes of Christian townsmen. Now they are in the castle.

So R. Hasdai Crescas wrote on October 19.

On August 11, the peasants came again; but this time they were repulsed and forced to retreat by the city officials. Nevertheless, the situation in the city was explosive. In Gerona, as in other Catalan cities, the tension was on the rise between the patricians and the artisans. The Jews tried to win over the artisans with money. (The negotiator representing the Jews was Joseph, son of Abraham Isaac Halevi. Both father and son were distinguished intellectuals and poets, friends of Profet Duran the Ephodi, author of *Ma'aseh*

Ephod.) A *jurado* of Gerona seems to have been the chief instigator of the disorders. Most of the municipal councillors intervened, at least in public, on behalf of the Jews. On August 13, the *jurados* informed the king that the peasants were still threatening the Jews, and that forty Jews had already been killed. True, the Jews claimed that the number of dead was larger, but the *jurados* pointed out that many Jews—women and children—had been slain by the Jews themselves. The honorable city fathers were unwilling to debit their account with the lives of those holy innocents who committed suicide in order to escape forced conversion. The rioting continued. The Jews were evacuated to the castle of Geronella, outside the city. The count of Ampurias, who had given refuge in his city of Castellon to the Jewish villagers, and the viscounts of Rocaberti and Cabrera, were asked by the king and the municipality of Gerona to restrain the peasants who were marching on the castle of Geronella.

In mid-September the peasants began to lay systematic siege to the castle of Geronella and to shoot at the Jews inside. The “little people” (*gente menuda*) demanded that the Jews should either be baptized or leave the city. Among the instigators were monks. Captain Berenguer de Cruilles, whom the king had sent to the aid of the Jews, was powerless. In a letter written much later (on December 8) the king rebuked this knight for not having reported the atrocities to him. No additional facts are available. At all events, the community of Gerona as a whole was not scattered. In July of the following year the Jews remaining in Gerona set up a new council. In private documents concerning Jews who had been converted in September and October 1391 (all merchants and artisans), not a single particularly famous or distinguished name is mentioned. The community of Gerona was saved from complete extinction, and to some extent still preserved the tradition of her scholars and pious men of earlier days.⁸

Regarding the situation in Lerida, the king received reports on August 9 from the acting governor of Catalonia and the city fathers. Here, too, excitement ran high in the wake of reports from Majorca and Barcelona. Realizing their inability to cope with the situation, the municipal authorities asked the king to send them a man of commanding personality. They declared that several monks had asked permission to enter the *callum* (Jewish quarter) in order to preach Christianity to the Jews. The king vetoed the request unequivocally, and wrote: "Unless they voluntarily accept Christianity, they will be more deeply sunk than ever in their error." Still, only five days later the king accepted the viewpoint of the city fathers and permitted monks to be sent to the fortress in which the Jews had in the meantime hidden, stipulating, however, that the choice should be made carefully; that no more than two monks should be sent; that they be required to swear to the purity of their intentions; and that they be taken secretly up to the fortress and taken out again at night. The king added that it would be well if the Jews would accept Christianity of their own free will; if, however, they did not, they were to be protected until he came. The good king eagerly awaited the *Jews'* decision. But on August 13, a breach was made in the defenses of the castle. Seventy-eight Jews were killed and all the rest—several hundred—preferred conversion to martyrdom.⁹

In Perpignan, also, due to the spread of the disturbances, the Jews were evacuated to the fortress. In the meantime the local population laid hands on the Jewish property that had been left behind in the city. Later it developed that even the governor had enriched himself on this propitious occasion. From the king's letters of September 5, it appears that the town councillors had informed him of their insistent demand that all the Jews be converted to Christianity; then the excitement would subside automatically. But the king replied that compulsory conversion was forbidden by the civil and

the canonical law alike, and that “those who interfere in this matter, either by persuasion or in any other way, endanger themselves with both God and man.” Then, too, the king did not wish the Jews to leave his country and remove their wealth. In the city all sorts of trouble-makers were beginning to gather. The fortress of Perpignan served as a haven not only for the local Jews, but for all who had fled from other parts of Catalonia, especially from Gerona. On December 19, the king, who was then in Barcelona, ordered the Jews to be evacuated from the fortress and returned to their homes. He also forbade any man to lay hands on their persons or property, or coerce them into changing their religion. Early in 1392, the king gave similar orders. The Jews, for their part, had to pledge that they would not leave the country. As a matter of fact, they were still living in the fortress in 1394, and the warder began to complain of the damage and filth caused by the unfortunates. Late in October 1394, complaints still reached the king about converted Jews who were inciting the populace against the Jews. The king then issued commands that all *conversos* who had no homes or families in the city should be expelled.¹⁰

In Tortosa, also, the Jews concealed themselves in the fortress. This was late in July 1391. In mid-August they were removed one by one to the homes of Christians where they were compelled to undergo baptism. This was done by local Christians and by apostate Jews who forced their wives, mothers and children to convert. The gatekeeper of the fortress, an erstwhile prison guard popularly known as “the minstrel” (*jutglar*), started the riots against the Jews and the municipal authorities on Sunday, August 14. Previously there had been rumors for several days that on Sunday the Jews, as well as the town councillors who were protecting them, would be killed, as in Majorca and Barcelona, for the Jews of Tortosa were no better than Jews elsewhere. The “minstrel” cursed and reviled the municipal authorities as being worse

than heretics, alleging that if they had not interfered, the Jews would have turned Christian long since. A story was current about a Jewess who had been taken from the fortress to a Christianas home for conversion, and had then been allowed to return to the fortress unbaptized. The “minstrel” was arrested for making inflammatory speeches, and the municipal authorities succeeded in preventing large-scale outbreaks. But it appears that many Jews were converted in the course of those days.¹¹

EFFORTS TO DELIVER AND RESTORE THE ALJAMAS
[THE WORK OF R. HASDAI CRESCAS]

All the Jewish communities of Catalonia, both urban and rural, were thus destroyed or impoverished. The conflagration that flared up in Castile spread to Aragon where it fed on increasingly widespread social unrest. In the cities the artisans were in revolt against the regime of the patricians, and outside the city walls the oppressed peasants also began to rise. During the fifteenth century this struggle was destined to develop into a civil war which threatened to undermine the institutions of the State. Nevertheless, the social ferment was only an auxiliary factor in the “holy war” against the Jews. Religious hostility was the determining motive behind the pogroms of 1391. Religious fanaticism had so permeated all classes of society that the beastliness of their behavior passed all but unnoticed. The rioters marched on the Jewish quarters “as if they were going out to wage a holy war at the king’s command,” as one royal decree put it.¹² After the conversions the disorders stopped.

On September 22, 1391, the king proceeded to have an appraisal made of the effects of the disturbances. He instructed royal officials throughout Catalonia and Valencia to gather information about communal property owned by the aljamas before the pogroms, and about the property of murdered Jews, especially of those who had left no heirs, or who had

committed suicide to escape forced conversion.¹³ The king, who had been powerless to prevent the destruction of the Jewish communities, now proposed to salvage from the upheaval what, according to accepted opinion, was due to the State; and he was not ashamed to deprive the kindred of Jews who had “committed suicide,” of their just rights of inheritance. Nor did it occur to him to leave to the few Jewish survivors communal property like synagogues, public foundations, ornaments of Torah scrolls, and the like. All these things were confiscated by his order for the benefit of the royal treasury. He also had Jewish books collected, and presented some of them to Christian theologians.

Nevertheless, it was fortunate for the Jews of Aragonia that there was a king at all—as there was not in Castile. For the very fact of his presence was, according to medieval notions, a guarantee that law and justice would be maintained. This king, the “good Don Juan,” was a weak man, amenable to all sorts of influences. When the disorders broke out, the king and queen were in Saragossa. They received reports regularly from the disturbed areas, wrote instructions and warnings, and sent knights and troops to organize the defense of the Jews. Suppression of public disturbances was held to be the duty of the State not only for material reasons and fear of damage to its “treasury,” but also because the prestige and the very existence of the State required that order be quickly restored. The country was, in fact, in a state of insurrection, no less menacing than the contemporary agrarian movements in France and England, or the disorders which broke out in Catalonia and Germany at a later date. The outcome of all those revolutionary movements shows that the monarchs of Europe had the power and ability to suppress them. But these same monarchs were never able to put down anti-Jewish riots at their height. The Spanish kings had few troops at their disposal. When disorders broke out, the rulers usually lacked not only energy and determination, but a consistent and

uniform policy. Many of the letters written by King John and his wife during those fateful weeks were filled with agitation and anxiety at the sight of disturbances that were likely to cause the utter annihilation of Spanish Jewry. Yet, at the same time, they cold-bloodedly furthered the royal treasury at the expense of the victims of the catastrophe. King John had often objected to compulsory baptism. But when the fanatics kept up their pressure, the king felt obliged to approve actions that were clearly coercive. Such inconsistency was not peculiar to the personality of John I. A well-meaning, humane, but devout king could not behave otherwise.

The king seems to have postponed his departure for the rebellious localities too long. His delay in leaving Saragossa was due not only to the heat and other incidental factors, but undoubtedly also to his fear that the Jews of Saragossa themselves might be attacked. Late in July and thereafter armed bands appeared in different parts of Aragon and assaulted the Jews. In Aynsa, Barbastro and Tamarite the Jews were literally besieged. The greater part of the Jewish quarter of Jaca was destroyed by fire. The villagers in the vicinity of Teruel were preparing to kill and loot. On September 16, the king sent to Don Lope de Gurrea urgent instructions to proceed to Huesca in order to protect the local Jewish population and to take energetic steps against all persons, regardless of social standing or creed, who had harmed, or would harm, the Jews by word or by deed. De Gurrea was authorized to arrest such persons, confiscate their property, and impose financial and corporal punishment, including the death penalty. The Jews were invited to submit their grievances to him. They had, of course, to pay the knight a handsome amount for his services. In his letter to Don Lope the king again rehearsed the gravity of the crimes that had been committed; and, he continued,

they are still trying to create riots and disturbances, and are guilty of scandalous conduct against the surviving

Jewish communities. What displeases us above all is that, as far as they are able, they spread an untrue rumor that such deeds are not distasteful to us. We consider this bad, and a bad example, which leads to contempt for, and infringement of, our royal rights and of the public welfare in general.

In letters written between the 18th and the 24th of August, the king revealed profound concern about the disturbances that seemed likely to break out in Saragossa itself:

“We apprehend that something of the kind will happen here.” . . .

“We intend to wait here a few days longer in order to restore normal conditions in this city before we depart.” . . .

“We would have left days ago if some people here had not stirred up—or tried to stir up—a similar tumult.”

“We have corrected that matter to some extent and are improving matters every day; and, with the help of God, we shall restore order not only in this city, but the whole Kingdom of Aragon will be peaceful and tranquil.”

On September 5, the king wrote again to Barcelona that he was still unable to fix the date of his journey because of his wife’s illness and “other matters pertaining to our honor and the profit of our lands for which we are in duty bound to devise a remedy before our journey.” These hints indicate that the Saragossa community was then in grave danger. In the letter written by R. Hasdai Crescas, which will be discussed below, there is a hint about the situation of Saragossa Jewry. Profet Duran, the author of *Ma’aseh Ephod*, believed that the communities of Aragon were saved by the merits of the pious men, who were accustomed to greet the dawn with readings from the Psalms. “And who can say that the survival of the communities of Aragon, which are the essence of what remains to us in the Spanish Exile, was not due to their diligence in prayer, their arising in night vigils to supplicate the Lord, their reliance on the sayings of the Scriptures, and

their hymns from the Book of Psalms?” Actually, the Jews were only rescued by the presence of the king, who saved them from extermination.¹⁴

Though the Jews were not able to organize and unite for armed self-defense, they did not sit by with folded hands, but made use of all the diplomatic means at their disposal. At the royal court in Saragossa, very great influence was wielded by their political and spiritual leader, R. Hasdai Crescas, who was in constant touch with the king and queen and their highest officials. The queen showed her personal interest in the Jewish philosopher by writing letters to Barcelona in the hope of saving his family. This great man had now become the spearhead of all efforts to save and restore the Jewish communities. In August 1391, he accompanied one of the highest-ranking diplomats, Francesco d’Aranda, on a secret royal mission to Aragon in order to collect funds for the needs of the Jews. On August 19, the queen sent an urgent message to both d’Aranda and, it would seem, to Hasdai Crescas, summoning them to return at once to Saragossa “because their absence is very harmful and dangerous in view of the constant reports that reach us daily from our aljamas, which are threatened with complete ruin and extermination.” The funds collected by these two distinguished delegates were intended to cover the travelling expenses of the royal couple, the wages of the troops sent to protect the Jews, and—as seems likely—the costs of a diplomatic mission to the papal court at Avignon which the government of Aragon and the Jewish leaders of Saragossa had already approached. Late in July the queen had written to the pope about the disorders in Valencia, asking him not to issue any bulls in favor of the rioters, and to take no action in the matter before considering the views of the king of Aragon. On the twentieth day in the month of Marheshwan, 5152 (October 19, 1391), Hasdai Crescas sent a letter to the Jews of Avignon in which he described briefly, but movingly, the disasters that had befallen

the Jews throughout Spain. Since the facts cited in his letter, insofar as they refer to the kingdom of Aragon, are identical with reports sent by local officials to the royal court, they must have been based on official data. There is reason to assume that R. Hasdai Crescas intended this letter to be used as the point of departure for negotiations with the papal court. In conclusion, he described the position and frame of mind of the Jews of Saragossa.

As for us here, throughout the provinces of Aragon there is neither breach nor alarm. By divine compassion remnants survive of all our communities; but despite energetic representations, after the widespread dispersal of all our possessions, nothing remains to us but our bodies. Nevertheless, our hearts are fearful, and our eyes are lifted to our Father in Heaven, that He may be merciful and heal our wounds and help us to remain steadfast! ¹⁵

At the end of October the king left Saragossa with the intention of punishing the rebels. The queen had left the city several days earlier, and her husband arranged overnight lodgings for her on her journey. This he did by giving orders that the Jews who had taken shelter in the castle of Balaguer should be dispersed; what, if anything, was done to assure the safety of the refugees is not known. While the queen was still on her journey, her heart was moved with compassion for the rioters, and she asked the king—though the storm had not yet subsided—to deal leniently with the blood-stained citizens of Lerida. Wherever the king set foot, it was the signal for prolonged negotiations and bargaining. The municipalities undertook to pay fines, but payments were made only after a lapse of years; and in some cases the fines were never paid. In return the king issued blanket pardons, which documents distorted the facts and shifted the blame to the Jews themselves. In the document of pardon granted to Valencia in November 1391, for example, the king approved a

report that had in the meantime been prepared by the city fathers. In this document the king declared that the city was entirely innocent; that all the criminals were non-residents; and that the municipality had done everything possible to seize and punish them. Since, moreover, some of the inhabitants of Valencia had already fled from the city, and “it was in danger of losing its entire population” as a result of the report that the king had taken “energetic measures” elsewhere; and since the revolt in Valencia had been less serious(!) than in other places and no harm had come to the royal officials stationed there; and since the stolen property had been restored to its owners and the Jews themselves were not entirely blameless(!)—in view of all these considerations, the king, upon the recommendation of the queen, was ready to forego vengeance, justice and truth. Only five of the criminals were hanged and twenty were banished from the Kingdom. As late as January 1392, two sons of a *jurado* of Valencia were arrested on a charge of looting, but were acquitted by the municipal council. The king arrived in Barcelona in the middle of December. Twenty-six men were sentenced to death in that city and executed; all the others were acquitted. For many months negotiations over fines and pardons dragged on with the municipality and various public bodies, as well as with the bishop of Barcelona, where some of the clergy had been involved in the crimes. During his stay in Barcelona, in March 1392, the king ordered R. Hasdai Crescas to visit him “because we are greatly in need of your presence owing to several matters connected with our service.” It is likely that Jewish affairs were discussed at this audience.¹⁶

Early in 1392, pogroms broke out in Aragon. The Jews of Teruel complained to the king that the peasants of the vicinity had become unruly and were ill-treating them. On January 17, the king replied in a letter and took the Jews under his special protection. The same thing happened in Daroca.

Organized attacks began again in Albarracin. The gate of the Jewish quarter was breached, and several Jews were killed. Royal officials arrested several of the rioters. It was not for nothing that the king warned them that the Jews of their city must not meet the fate of the Jewish communities of Catalonia. And it was not without a special reason that the king and queen wrote from Barcelona on April 23, 1392, to the municipality of Saragossa and its officials praising them for the new measures they had taken for the protection of the Jews. A certain monk who was related to the archdeacon of Ecija was then in Saragossa and proposed to renew the “holy war.” The king ordered that this instigator was not to be permitted to escape because “such persons must not be allowed to live.” “And if the archdeacon, the uncle of the monk in question, who brought about the destruction of the Castilian Jews, comes to your city, arrest him and send him to me; or else throw him into the river.” What ultimately became of the man is not known. During that year the king issued various decrees for the restoration of order and security on the highways. Among other things, the carrying of weapons was banned.¹⁷

How did the Jews of Spain fare after the pogroms of 1391? Regarding the Jews of Castile, the data at hand are too scanty to enable us to describe their situation thereafter. The absence of any literary sources for that period is in itself an indication of spiritual aridity. The large and leading communities, like those of Seville, Toledo and Burgos, were destroyed not only by the violence of their enemies, but chiefly by their own moral deterioration. The regents who ruled Castile during the king’s minority did everything in their power to punish the criminals, and when Henry III attained his majority, he carried on the same policy with determination. In the history of Castile Henry III is known, both in his domestic and his foreign policies, as one of its most resolute monarchs. The penalties, however, consisted mostly of

finances imposed upon the cities and villages by way of settlement, as was done in Aragon. Henry endeavored to restore the ruined communities and to curb the anti-Jewish agitation. Though most of the Jewish courtiers had been killed, baptized, or dismissed from their posts, Henry III and his advisers again entrusted Jews with important functions in the fiscal administration of the State. In the 1390's, Don Yuçaf aben Verga is referred to as "the treasurer of the king in the Kingdom of Toledo," and Çuiema aben Arroyo and other Jews held posts in the accounting department of the royal chancery. It was typical of the times that the archbishop of Toledo could, in 1395, make so bold as to appoint an apostate Jew, his personal physician, Maestre Pedro, as chief justice of the Jews in his diocese. We have an official minute of the announcement of this appointment in the synagogue at Alcalá de Henares, and of the Jewish protests against the archbishop's action as illegal. The only Castilian Jew then highly esteemed by his own people was the king's physician, Don Meir Alguadex, one of whose sons-in-law, Ferrand Alvarez de la Torre, converted during the disturbances. The poet Solomon de Piera lavishes lengthy encomiums upon this Don Meir, calling him one of the select few left by destiny to the Jewish people so that he might be a shield and a buckler to them in their hour of need.¹⁸

A modest Jewish center survived in the little Kingdom of Navarre. The leading Jew of Navarre was Don Joseph Orabuena, chief rabbi of the Kingdom and physician and confidant of Charles III. Don Joseph accompanied the king on his journeys to France, and it is not improbable that he advised him on the grave international problems under consideration at the time, which was the period of the schism in the Church. There seem to have been no large-scale anti-Jewish outbreaks in Navarre, but the religious propaganda which spread from the neighboring districts led to a number of conversions to Christianity. In the early 1390's, the Jews

of Castile negotiated with the king of Navarre over some matter of which the particulars are not known to us. Perhaps the Jews appealed to the king to intercede on their behalf; or they may have asked permission to settle Jewish refugees in his Kingdom. The respected community of Tudela, which had come down in the world, reinstituted the regulations of its forebears for enhancing communal and religious discipline,

inasmuch as everything depends upon the worship of the Creator, blessed be He, and evil decrees come to the world for the sins of our generation, and the re-settlement of the communities depends upon good deeds; and if this was true of all former generations, how much more does it apply to the present generation, of whom but a few out of many have survived, because of the multitude of our sins. We must therefore improve ourselves and take precautions for the worship of the Creator, blessed be He and exalted, and the service of our lord the king (may his glory increase), so that we may dwell in his kingdom; and that the other Jewish communities of the other kingdoms, seeing how well we have succeeded in maintaining our faith, may also come to dwell in our midst.¹⁹

Efforts towards the rehabilitation of Spanish Jewry after 1391 originated chiefly in Saragossa. The government of John I intended to re-establish the aljamas and expressed that intention in various decrees. The government's intentions were, however, violently opposed by the urban Christians. On September 10, 1392, the king issued a formal order dissolving the aljama of Barcelona. Three weeks later, on October 2 and 3, other orders were issued by the king in which he directed that the Jewish community of Barcelona should be re-established, though not in its old quarter, the walls of which had in the meantime been torn down by order of the municipal council so that Christians might be settled there. The king allotted to the community-to-be a new quarter and a new synagogue and had the old cemetery returned to it. He confirmed all its

former privileges, including that of living under the laws of its own faith. The king furthermore granted the Jews of Barcelona exemption from taxes and contributions for a specified period, a general amnesty for old misdemeanors, and a moratorium on the payment of their debts. The plans provided for a new community of 200 families. In the ordinance for the re-establishment of the community of Barcelona, the point was made that the destruction of this community, which “had been very wealthy formerly and had enjoyed numerous privileges and liberties,” was a blow not only to the revenue of the Kingdom, but to the honor of the city as well.

In May 1393, the king and queen informed R. Hasdai Crescas in a letter that they were firmly resolved to re-establish the Jewish communities in Barcelona and Valencia, and that he was therefore authorized, together with two Jews from Saragossa and two from Calatayud, to select up to sixty Jewish families from all the communities of the Kingdom and to compel them to settle in the two cities. The funds required for purchasing houses and building a wall for the protection of the new settlers, amounting to 1,500 gold *solidos*, were to be collected by them from all the Jewish communities of Aragon, as R. Hasdai Crescas and his four associates deemed fit. Here we have a political document unparalleled in medieval Jewish history. In November 1394, R. Hasdai Crescas was again summoned to Barcelona (on this occasion by the queen) “because we are in great need of your presence in view of several difficult matters which affect us and our court not inappreciably.” The queen may have been referring to the future of the Jewish community of Barcelona. Very few Jews were, however, willing to return to Barcelona, no doubt because of the strong opposition of local Christians. Most of the wealthy Jews had already been baptized and continued to do business within the city walls, and Barcelona had no need of impoverished new residents. In March 1395, the king wrote

to his wife that a Jew—the son of his lion keeper (such were the spokesmen of whose services the Jews now had to avail themselves!)—had informed him on behalf of the Jews of Barcelona that their synagogue was to be demolished and had asked him to intercede. The Jews left Barcelona again the very same year, thereafter, and until comparatively recent times, not a single Jew established legal residence there. In 1401, King Martin absolutely forbade the establishment of a Jewish community in Barcelona, and in 1424, in a special “privilege” which he granted to the municipality, Alfonso V confirmed the ban in perpetuity. Negotiations over the re-establishment of the Jewish community in Valencia took the same course and ended in the same way.²⁰

The efforts to restore the Jewish community of Majorca were attended with greater success. In that city a few Jews had remained even after the disturbances, and of those who fled to Algiers a small number had returned or maintained their commercial connections with the island. Early in 1394, 150 Jews came from Portugal to settle in Majorca. In 1395, King John pledged to protect all Jews who had gone abroad during the disturbances and now wished to return in order to re-build their homes and resume their trading in the provinces under the crown of Aragon, particularly in the Balearic islands. But none of these efforts bore any tangible fruits. The best Jewish and *converso* elements had but one desire: to leave the island at the earliest possible opportunity. In this they were more fortunate than the Jews of the continental communities. During the disorders some of the wealthier Majorcan Jews had left for Africa, and now, on the strength of their commercial privileges, they returned in order to take their wives and children back with them. One of a number of such journeys, that taken by R. Moses Gabbai, a Majorcan scholar and poet, was immortalized in verse by the poet Solomon de Piera, who congratulated him on his decision to leave the Christian countries:²¹

Like to Sodom think thou the Land of Edom,
The home of men that are but verminous things.
Let every sight seem briar and thorn to thee,
Change every name, say dogs instead of kings.

Rejoicing in the tears of thy tormented ones,
Upon the day of downfall and decay,
They strengthened thy assailants, broke into
Thy homes, took every stick and stone away.

O may their perfumed incense now emit
A loathsome stench befouling it, and all
Their bread be adder-like, their wine turn sour,
Their honey change to wormwood and to gall.

Abhor their food as on the Passover,
Think their paradise a very Hell,
And choose the Arab zone to be thine own,
Whether there it shall go ill or well,
And thou shall wear rich robes or rags. O, brother,
Rejoice, for heaven guideth thee. Shun servitude,
Not poverty. Let carobs and coarse bread
Suffice thee, and throw to dogs all richer food.

In the smaller towns of continental Catalonia, it was a simpler matter to restore the Jewish communities because, thanks to the material benefits they derived from the presence of the Jews, the local Christians wished them to return. In Gerona, the communal council was reconstituted as early as 1392. In order to expedite the restoration of the Jewish community in Tarragona, the queen promised the Jews already living there or those who would settle there in the future, that they would be exempted from taxes for five years; she also granted them permission to collect funds from the other Jewish communities for building a new synagogue, purchasing scrolls of the Torah and other books, and recovering their cemetery (August-October, 1393). The townships seem to have

viewed these endeavors with a sympathetic eye. The results are not known to us. At any event, for the first time in the history of Spain, the right of Jews to settle in a place was made contingent upon the consent of the municipalities. At the very time when the king was discussing the fate of the Barcelona synagogue with the son of his lion keeper, he wrote a letter to the governor of Catalonia in behalf of the Jews of Cervera. It had come to his attention that the municipal councillors were about to evict the Jews from the large street, in which they had recently settled and where there were good houses and a synagogue, and to shift them to another street, where they had lived previously. This other street was small, the synagogue there lay in ruins, and the houses were either demolished or dilapidated. "We know," wrote the king, "that you have seen all this with your own eyes, and yet you have not restrained these malicious men who are trying to expel the Jews by chicanery," though such action would be both damaging and offensive to the Kingdom and its prerogatives. Since the Jews of his country had suffered grave injury, and since their ruin had caused the government untold losses, the king was most desirous of having them rehabilitated, "particularly in Cervera where, as we are aware, a large new aljama is soon to be established." The king accordingly instructed the governor that the two streets previously held by the Jews must be restored to them. The Christians who in the meantime had squatted in the Jewish quarter, and the converted Jews who had continued to reside there, were to be evicted or settled elsewhere with due compensation.

At Fraga the Jews had taken shelter in the fortress during the rioting, but it was long before they could return to their homes. Efforts in that direction had to be backed with money. The small community was obliged to pawn the crowns of its Torah scrolls and sell its lands, and even then had to appeal to the other aljamas for help. In 1398, thirty-six members of the community left Fraga and scattered in ten nearby

villages. Queen Maria, wife of King Martin, who had acquired the ownership rights to Fraga, sent orders to each of the thirty-six deserters to return within one month, since they had given pledges to their aljama, in a document written in Hebrew and in Catalan, not to leave the place before paying their share of the communal debt. At the same time the queen asked the monastery of Sigena not to harass the Jews of Fraga, because otherwise the aljama would lose all its people and cease to exist.

Efforts to rehabilitate the community of Lerida, which had disintegrated wholly during the disorders, were more systematic. Documents dating from the years 1400–1413 contain details of the negotiations conducted for this purpose between the Jews and the authorities. It was planned to re-establish a community of 100 families in Lerida. The Jews asked for the return of their old fortified quarter in the center of the city, which had been totally destroyed by fire, and suggested that the municipality lease them houses in another part of the city at low rentals until the repairs were completed. The Jews also asked to have their synagogue restored to them—the bishop had intended to convert it into a church—or to be compensated for it so that they might build another. The Jewish settlers received various economic concessions, such as tax exemptions, a moratorium on debts, and the like. The former communal regime was restored, with autonomy in levying and collecting taxes and in the sphere of law and justice, including authority to impose the penalties of imprisonment and flogging, and to have informers executed by the royal bailiff.²²

Together with these endeavors to restore the ruined communities, there were signs of a contrary trend which, considering the times, was almost inevitable. Moderate Christians felt that compulsory baptism was not pleasing in the sight of God; but, once they were baptized, the converts were regarded by canon law as Christians, and those who reverted to their former religion, as well as those who encouraged

them to do so, were considered heretics. The Christians sought to strengthen the new faith of the *conversos* by argument and instruction, and by organizing them into special *converso* fraternities. The regulations promulgated by the government, even while the disturbances were in progress, to prevent Jews from leaving the country were prompted not only by material considerations, but by a religious motive: to preclude the converts' return to Judaism. In 1393, John I issued the first basic regulations designed to isolate the new converts (*conversos*) from their Jewish brethren by forbidding them to live or eat together. The more effectively to enforce these instructions, the king revived the old regulations requiring Jews—but not the *conversos*—to dress differently from the Christians. The *conversos* were placed under the supervision of the bishops, to whom they were responsible for their conduct. There are adequate grounds for assuming that the king was impelled to take these pious actions by the pressure of certain groups, and that at first he gave the orders only perfunctorily. One order of this kind, which had been sent to Barcelona, was revoked a month later, doubtless at the request of the Jews. No traces are to be found of any uniform procedure or comprehensive legislation in this respect. The public, whether Christian by birth or conversion, voluntarily maintained a close watch upon the behavior of the *conversos*. In the early years of mass conversion, the Inquisition does not seem to have concerned itself much with the new converts. The religious and social upheaval of those years obliged the Inquisition, it may safely be assumed, to proceed with caution and utmost tolerance. The king instructed secular officials in various places to conduct criminal investigations of *conversos* who had tried to flee the country with the intention of returning to Judaism or who secretly practiced Jewish rites. Similar steps were taken against Jews who aided such *conversos* or who, by persuasion or force, sent young converts belonging to their own families away to other countries

so that they might be true to the faith of their fathers. During the reign of Martin I (1395–1410) and his wife Doña Maria, the government's Jewish policy was increasingly oriented along religious lines. Gradually, it had become necessary to choose between a policy of realism and of human toleration, and one of unqualified religious extremism. Tangible barriers therefore had to be set up between the Jews and their *converso* brethren.²³

In the meantime, the Jews themselves were making unremitting efforts to re-establish and rehabilitate their communities in Spain. On the basis of a letter written by the king in April 1396, it would appear that for many years R. Hasdai Crescas was involved “regardless of hardships, expense and personal danger,” to forward the rehabilitation of the *aljama* of Barcelona and the restoration of its cemetery, as well as with “various other matters pertaining to the welfare and honor of the Jewish community of the country.” In 1401, R. Hasdai Crescas spent several weeks in the Kingdom of Navarre, where it may be assumed that he discussed with King Charles III some matters relating to the political concerns of the Jewish population.²⁴

It was due to R. Hasdai Crescas that, in those troubled times, the community of Saragossa became a rallying-point for all Spanish Jewry; indeed, this community was well aware of its historic mission. In a *takkanah*, regarding the communal tax known as *Cisa*, adopted in 1397, there is a reference to the expenses incurred by the community in the

service of the queen, for the restoration and protection of our holy Torah and for saving the lives and property of our community and of all the other Jewish communities in Spain; for, with the restoration of this community, all the other communities will be restored; and if perchance—which God forbid—the above-mentioned *Cisa* should suffer loss and diminution, great harm might be caused to our community and consequently to all the

other communities which are dependent upon it; and so that such a precious jewel, which is a refuge and a shelter for us all, constantly guarding our Divine Torah, helping us in our afflictions and defending our lives and possessions, shall suffer no harm or diminution . . .

The aljama of Saragossa adopted the *takkanah* in question.²⁵

The political ideas then current in the best Jewish circles can be inferred from a series of *takkanoth* drafted by R. Hasdai Crescas, with the approval of the authorities, in June 1396. These statutes were obviously intended to reinforce the powers of the *mukademin* (trustees) so that in emergencies they might make decisions promptly, without the excessive delays imposed by strict accountability to the public. But less than three years later, in February 1399, in response to grievances submitted by the democratic elements in the community, the queen found it necessary to make certain important changes in the constitution of the great legislator. This revised constitution (the only one to have come down to us in its entirety) contains the statements that the law drafted by the rabbi of Saragossa, Maestre Hasdai Crescas, was “indeed wisely made and beneficent; but experience, the teacher of all things, has frequently shown that regulations which seem good at one time tended, because of changing conditions and the wickedness of men, to defeat their own purpose at another.” Under R. Hasdai Crescas’ regulations, the method of electing the *mukademin* (*adelantados*) handicapped the democratic forces, which had made progress over the previous decades. Thus, the treasurer (*clavario*) was chosen from among the four communal *adelantados*. In this way the communal treasury was entrusted into the keeping of one of the *adelantados* and was not in fact removed from their jurisdiction. Now, however, the queen re-instituted the old procedure, whereby the *mukademin* were elected by representatives of the three Estates, while the treasurer was elected by all the members of the community, the *mukademin*

having no special say. Where R. Hasdai Crescas' constitution had authorized the *mukademin* to spend up to fifty *solidos* without consulting the communal council or informing it for what purpose the money was spent, the queen now reduced the sum to twenty *solidos*. In R. Hasdai's constitution special powers were made available for action to be taken in "urgent and secret matters," when it was necessary to remit money to persons "whose names cannot and must not be mentioned"; under such circumstances it was not, of course, possible to obtain the necessary receipts. In such cases the decision about the amount to be spent and how it was to be covered rested with a committee of two or three, who might or might not be members of the communal council. The queen, too, realized that at times the *aljama* might have to pay out moneys secretly in the public interest, and so she ruled, accordingly, that the special committee was to be retained, but that it was to be composed of three members, one for each of the Estates. Moreover, she limited the authority of this committee; it was to pay out funds only against the written order of the "secret council," a body which probably owed its origin to the emergency situation, since it is mentioned only on this occasion. R. Hasdai Crescas' *takkanoth* had set the salaries of the communal delegates at a maximum of twelve *solidos* a day (a very modest remuneration as compared to the salaries of the municipal delegates of Saragossa), and had prohibited bonuses. This clause was confirmed by the queen, who fixed even more severe penalties for its violation. R. Hasdai Crescas' constitution provided that the members of the community were to contribute a certain sum annually towards the liquidation of the communal debt. The queen approved this clause as well, and designated a sum of 8,000 *solidos* a year (R. Hasdai had suggested various amounts, as the situation might require, but in the main had larger sums in mind). To this she added a rider to the effect that, if some of these funds were spent for any other purpose, however

urgent, the *mukademin*, the treasurer and the communal councillors would have to make good the amount out of their own pockets. In general, the queen forbade the treasurer to disburse any funds on the strength of *ex-post-facto* official approval. She also made it impossible for the *mukademin* to appoint or to dismiss communal delegates without the consent of the council.

Generally speaking, the queen strove to modify the authoritarian tendencies in R. Hasdai's *takkanoth*, but she also endeavored to restrain demagogic extremism. Thus, she forbade the holding of general assemblies without an order from the royal steward or the written consent of the council. For she regarded this as a bad and dangerous practice on the part of persons who, being unable to secure the support of the council for their designs, summoned all the members of the community in order to obtain by pretext what they could not achieve by fair means. "In every good administration (*regimiento*)" declared the queen, "it is customary to forbid general assemblies; hence provision is made for a council of loyal and prudent men, so that public business may be discussed by them with wisdom and moderation, and not suddenly and without deliberation." The queen, moreover, forbade the dismissal of the communal scribe (*escrivano*) from his post by means of individual pressure; such action was to be taken solely by the *mukademin* and councillors, and none but a representative of the public might take over the records.

R. Hasdai Crescas had placed a ban of excommunication on whomever dared tamper with his regulations. This notwithstanding, the queen introduced some amendments of her own, and arranged matters so that the *takkanoth* might be reviewed again and changes proposed after a lapse of three years. Nine men—three from each Estate—would then be empowered to submit proposals for amendments to the communal council. If their proposals were turned down by the council, the nine would be entitled to bring them before the

queen. She also made provision for authorizing the *mukademin* and the council a year later to appoint three additional councillors, or three new councillors to replace that number, subject to the approval of the royal commissioner and of Maestre Hasdai, whose authority on the whole remained beyond all question. Finally, the queen increased the salary of the communal scribe, whose duties had grown more onerous with the limiting of the *mukademin's* authority. Jointly with a committee composed of six to ten members, the council was empowered to increase the indirect communal taxes. The text of this revised constitution was read to the members of the community by R. Hasdai Crescas at a gathering in the *Bikkur Holim* synagogue. When those present were asked whether they approved of the changes, the majority, according to the minutes, replied in the affirmative. The rest was silent. And so, for the time being, the problem of the communal regime, which had been the subject of violent controversy in spite of the critical general situation, was solved—solved, that is, until the community of Saragossa, which regarded itself as the proud bulwark of Spanish Jewry, was again shattered by new disasters.²⁶

CONVERSION AND DESPAIR

Interwoven with the task of material rehabilitation were complicated and involved religious problems. Reliable reports of heroism and self-sacrifice have come down to us from the very days of the disorders. There were some Spanish Jews who, following in the footsteps of the pious of Ashkenaz, killed themselves, their wives and their children for the sake of their religion. But these martyrs were far outnumbered by those who readily acknowledged the Christian Messiah, “who came to them by force.” Whole communities were scattered and disintegrated due solely to conversions. As is to be expected, most of the apostates whose names we know came from the wealthy and cultured classes. Jewish religious zealots rightly

sought the cause of apostasy in the philosophical views of the converts, and contrasted these people with the humble men and women whose simple faith withstood the test. This, in fact, can be demonstrated from the records, which also show how families were broken up by religious differences.

Late in 1391, Maestre Astruc Rimoch from Fraga, a physician well known in his day, wrote to a friend in the city of Monzon whose father and brothers had been converted to Christianity:

Why do you cry before me and why this commotion in my ears? Why do you weep, and why is your countenance downcast, and why do rivers of tears flow from your eyes? You sound to your own ears like a [beaten] brass pot, and your lowered eye draws from the well of bitter waters, which are to your mouth and heart as honey from the comb. Your father was the first and there shall be none after; why do you make your nest in the cliff of sighs and your dwelling-place in the heights of anguish, and why do you boast and say, “There is none like me to mourn Calamity, I am her first-born child, I will keen like the jackal and mourn, no man matters to me and all is in vain”? Have we not a portion in the downfall of your father, do we not share his catastrophe with you? Of his and your mother’s disgrace the half-part is yours; but the rest is ours and our children’s for ever . . . As for Judah*—he, like “Er, Onan, Shelah and Peretz,”** is doomed to destruction and damnation—he associated with men devoid of honor, and did not know any better. I can neither comfort you nor myself be comforted, for where once I admired his figure and good taste, I now bewail the harsh day of his apostasy. Cease to regard the misfortune of your father and mother and behold instead that of your brother: your tender younger in years has left the fold never to return! Nonetheless, the public grief is private consolation, and nine parts of comfort are

* The name of the brother who had converted.

** See Gen. 38.3–29 and Bereshith Rabba ch. 85.

set before you. Look about you! Everywhere brother is divided against brother and kin against kin. Be strong, then, my brother, for the land is swept with violence and rather than continue to rebuke yourself you should relent from sorrow and sadness! As for your poor, regal mother, I can inform you that she is living in bitterness in her husband's house and continues to abide by the Law and act decorously; and although many are her tormentors and would-be converters, her one reply is that she would die before going over. But now, thanks be to God, nothing hinders her from making her way daily to the *judería*, and when she visits the House of God, the women there inquire of one another that she should not have to walk alone, and the good souls among them accompany her up to the gate of the quarter. Praise be to God that they should think of this! But in regard to her departure, it would appear to be your fathers intention not to permit her to leave the city until he takes another wife, and we are all trying to put him at ease. Therefore, my brother, have confidence in her fortitude and that she will transgress neither in deed nor word, and depend on me.²⁷

On October 19, 1391, a converted Jew brought his wife, a faithful Jewess, before the royal bailiff in the village of Santa Coloma de Queralt (near Barcelona) and made the following statement: He had repeatedly urged his wife to accept the Catholic religion, so that they might continue to live together as man and wife, but she had given him no answer. Accordingly, he now repeated the question three times in the bailiff's presence. Thereupon his wife replied: "Sir, you are a Christian, and I am a Jewess. I can therefore live with you no longer. But in fact I shall not release you until I receive what is my due according to my marriage contract." In other instances recorded in the same parish register for December 1391 and early 1392, it was the husband who remained true to Judaism and the wife who wished to be baptized. If the

records are to be believed, the separated couples settled all their personal and economic problems amicably and peaceably.²⁸ But there were also cases in which advantage was taken of the complicated state of affairs to extort money. A converted Jew living in Jativa, for example, refused to go through the ceremony of *halizah* (levirate) so that his brother's childless widow might be free to re-marry, excusing himself on the ground that the governor of Valencia had refused him permission to take the journey to the home of his sister-in-law. Thereupon the queen intervened on the woman's behalf and wrote to the governor of Valencia that the convert had a Christian wife and children and was not interested in the widow; the man must therefore be compelled to take the journey at the expense of the woman's father. But he must not demand more than the costs of the journey because the Jews were heavily burdened as it was.²⁹ In both urban and rural parts of the country conversions broke up family ties and separated relatives and friends. Many of the *conversos* went over to the enemy camp immediately after they were baptized, though the outbreaks were still continuing, and tried to demonstrate their zeal for their new faith. Such people forced their families and friends to change their religion and became the chief instigators against the local Jews. Others wavered for many years after their baptism, and some of these even practiced a few of the Jewish rites in secret until they either succeeded in escaping from Spain or wholeheartedly accepting the victorious religion and themselves began to persecute their former brethren. Still others, ostensibly devoted to their new faith, remained secretly friendly to their old community. Money was their greatest resource. The problem of the *anussim* (forced converts) evoked complex *halakhic* questions, particularly in the sphere of matrimonial law. The responsa exchanged in this connection with Spanish scholars who had fled to Algiers are well known, and without a doubt all these problems were dealt with by

scholars who remained behind in Castile and Aragon. Even more difficult than the cases submitted for rabbinical decision were those which were never recorded.

THE POET SOLOMON DE PIERA AND HIS CIRCLE

A significance that is both historical and transcendental is to be attributed to this period of religious hostility which, in its literature, articulated its ideas and sentiments remarkably well. For a full understanding of the situation we must begin by observing that class of intellectuals which, although its religious devotion was not great, nevertheless remained faithful to Judaism. We shall probably not be guilty of unfairness if we include in this group the poet R. Solomon b. Meshullam de Piera,³⁰ whose name indicates descent from one of the great families of Catalonia. There are many references in his poems and letters to the catastrophe of 1391. In a poem sent to R. Moses aben Abez he describes the universal ruin, and lays particular stress on the fate of his own family:

That day death's angels ransacked my home . . .

Around my house the foe encamped,

Built his ramparts and his ramp

And broke inside; there lustily

He sacked and pillaged pitilessly . . .

My sons sought the safety of the stony cliff, and fled

Without a blessing on their head.

—My fine young bucks, who in captivity

Now banished are by iniquity! . . .

Hunted like fledglings, I know not where

They rest tonight; nor whether they are

Not somewhere sold or slaughtered; nor on what pyre

Their bodies' flesh is broiled by fire . . .

The earth is clean dissolved and broken down,

And down is come the town's foundation stone.³¹

The poet's home was destroyed in the upheaval and his children irretrievably lost; nor did he know whether they had

been sold into slavery, slaughtered or burnt at the stake. Solomon himself escaped to Saragossa and was received into the home of Don Benvenist de la Cavalleria, where he continued his literary labors and became the tutor and friend of his benefactor's son. He seems also to have served as secretary of the aljama of Saragossa. Solomon was also the friend of R. Hasdai Crescas. An elegiac poem has been preserved in which he laments the death of that philosopher and leader R. Hasdai Crescas, and reviews his career very fully. Solomon de Piera exchanged poems of friendship with R. Zerahia Halevi (known as R. Ferrer), who succeeded R. Hasdai Crescas as the rabbi of Saragossa. One of the poet's best friends was R. Moses aben Abez, a man loyal to tradition and a pillar of the community. He was particularly grateful to R. Meir Alguadex for kindnesses shown him even before 1391 and for his efforts on behalf of both the community and private individuals during the disturbances.³²

Except the Lord who saved some few,
The doom of Sodom would have swept
Them all away, but on the day
Of ill, His blessing still He kept.

And as a flag on high He stood by
His folk, with loving grace in the face
Of all the world, and, pure and true,
He fathered His forsaken race.
It is the breath out of His lips
That dries the mighty sea of woes.
His name shines forth, lights up the dark
But casts pitch darkness on our foes . . .³³

In many of his poems Solomon de Piera expressed his fervent faith in the coming of the Messiah, the resurrection of the dead, and the reward and punishment which God would mete out to the pious and the wicked, respectively, in accordance with their merits and deserts. He encouraged the work of Jewish apologists.

In others of his poems, however (as well as in remarks made to friends), he strikes a note of hopeless despair whose like is not to be found in more pious individuals. Astruc Cresques of Solsona, a contemporary scholar and rabbi, was aggrieved because de Piera did not inquire about his welfare, “after he had undergone many ordeals resulting from the violent decrees.” All was topsy-turvy, the nation’s leaders were confused, and “the pillars upon which the house rests now are moved.” What, then, could be expected of “the hyssop on the wall”?*

Dispirited they walk like a shadow, broken, shattered, afraid of the burnished arrows. . . . The headsmen of the people gather together . . . they have run hither and thither seeking [counsel], but have not found it, for the death-dealing desert hath closed in upon them . . . Souls cry out, dry bones, strengthless they walk, wheresoever they tread there no peace is, for the land super-abounds with abominations and corpses, and the land shall not be atoned for . . . Behold, we have been dealt with as with strangers, as with sheep for the slaughter. Abatement has come like a pause between two movements** shaking and toppling the capital, and wrathful ordeals have befallen us. The malicious foe has reaped the harvest, he sought to harvest our days, the summer is ended, the end is come upon us. The speckled vulture*** would have destroyed us utterly had not the Lord of Hosts schemed to prevent the annihilation of His people, of which a remnant shall remain until the last Aramean † is ruined. May the destroyers’ counsel be turned against them, to extinguish and annul! What hast thou found in me, and in the splendors of my house, and

*The allusion is to the proverb, If the cedars [i.e., the high and mighty] have been struck down by lightning, what shall the hyssop on the wall do? (Moed Katan 25b).

**A pun on the Hebrew word *tenuoth*, which may also mean vowels; what respite was granted to the Jews is compared to the phonetic pause between two vowels.

*** The reference is to Jeremiah 12.9.

† Gentile

what seest thou now? For now I shall sleep in the dust, and thou shall seek me in the hole of the rock. The stones of the crown are beaten in sunder like chalk-stone in a foreign land; they swoon as the wounded of the sword in the streets, as corpses in the land of great drought, as sheep led by death to their doom . . . I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest, but refuge find I none!”³⁴

Upon the death of one of Benvenist de la Cavalleria’s sons, Solomon de Piera wrote him:

We can inherit no portion of comfort, only think of the favor of those who have been lost and cast out by the fury of the oppressor. He has subdued the best among our faith, he has brought the youth of Israel to its knees. Nor did the first days last long, and they are best of? who have been killed and murdered by the sword, and especially God’s martyrs. And this will be the day we look for and reckon of, the day of peace: When a man may die a righteous death at home, neither falling into the hands of his fellow man, nor changing [his God], but living blessedly. But now raging fathers slaughter their sons [i.e., martyr their sons to prevent their conversion, as was the practice of the Ashkenazi pietists in times of persecution], high praise to God. Let us then lift our hearts in prayer to God in heaven, that he may establish and have mercy upon the remnant [of Israel], and the company that is left shall escape. . . .³⁵

To a friend who had asked to be consoled, de Piera wrote:

My friend, why criest thou to icons,
And why giv’st thou thy praise to idols? . . .
How canst thou ask for holy offerings
From one who has partaken of untithed crops? . . .³⁶

These lines echo the bewilderment of a generation deprived of a simple faith for which pietists had offered up their lives. Indeed, the Averroist philosophy was a major cause of com-

munal disaster. When R. Hasdai Crescas dedicated his magnum opus to a polemical attack on “the Greek [Aristotle] who has dimmed the eyes of Israel in these our times,” he was indulging in no mere rhetorical flourish. In the very midst of the disturbances, Jewish intellectuals in Saragossa were arguing that

the object of all the commandments is the comprehension of intellectual concepts, and in support of this they cite the worthy verse “And thou shall love the Lord thy God, etc.” (Deut. 6.5); around this axis their exegesis revolves. They also cite as proof what the Torah says about the love of God (Deut. 11.13); for who, they say, can love Him that has not known Him? Not only this, but they have subordinated the practice of the commandments to the theory, so much so, that they have invented a rationalization, forgotten the entire purpose of the commandments and argued that the object of the laws concerning tithing, gleaning, and so forth, is to instill in the soul the spirit of charity.”³⁷

R. Zerachia Halevi, R. Hasdai Crescas’ disciple who succeeded him to his rabbinical post in Saragossa, was directed by his master to reply to such reasonings. These polemical disputations broke out in the very community that had once regarded itself as the pearl of Spanish Jewry. The practical effect of such discussions was clear enough. Those individuals who habitually looked down upon the simple masses who scrupulously observed all the commandments and were not afraid, even in a time of national and religious emergency, to proclaim their faith—these same men, when the test came, lacked the spiritual fortitude to prefer death to apostasy. In much the same spirit as they had previously denied the authority of biblical law, they now accepted the rites and ceremonies of an alien religion; ultimately they remained faithful to their “religion of the intellect,” the crowning article of faith for all Averroists, whether Jewish or Christian.

THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

SOLOMON HALEVI AND JOSHUA HALORKI

The literary controversy that now flared up between the champions of Judaism and those converts who wished to retain a foot in both doors was not limited to the old and well-worn arguments. The polemic between Judaism and Christianity, as carried on in Spain in the period between 1391 and 1415, was unparalleled for its splendid literary talent, its passionate impetuosity, and the use of every weapon in the armory of scholasticism. Echoes from that period of trial and decision still reverberate through its literature. In the numerous poems and treatises written in Hebrew at the time, there is hardly a paragraph but contains some reference to the great political and spiritual cataclysm. Some manuscripts which have come down to us containing polemical discussions include correspondence between Joshua Halorki of Alcañiz and Solomon Halevi of Burgos. Joshua Halorki was a physician and scientific writer who was on intimate terms with Benvenist de la Cavalleria, the father and patron of the small community in which he lived. Solomon Halevi (known as Paulus de Sancta Maria after his baptism) was doubtless the foremost *converso* in that period of apostasy. He was a descendant of a distinguished family in Burgos which had for several generations been engaged in tax farming and other government business, and belonged to the circle of scholars and intellectuals of which we have spoken. Among his friends were R. Judah, grandson of R. Asher, Don Meir Alguadex, Don Joseph Orabuena and Don Benvenist de la Cavalleria. Correspondence between Solomon Halevi and R. Isaac b. Sheshet in the early 1380's is devoted to a discussion of what is or is not ritually lawful, that is to say, of matters which an intellectual who carried aloft the banner of the religion of the intellect might presumably regard as remote from his own range of interests.

R. Isaac wrote with much affectionate respect. His words are not to be taken as empty rhetoric, because in the same correspondence he speaks with utter frankness to Solomon Halevi of the hatred borne towards him in Saragossa, and confides his intention of leaving the *aljama*. R. Isaac also wrote to R. Judah b. Asher, then rabbi of Burgos, expressing his regret that the latter had been missing from a company of scholars and friends which met at a wedding in Saragossa: "But the noble Don Solomon Halevi enlightened us by relating that thine absence had been for thy good." Naturally, this gifted man studied not only the Talmud, but Jewish and Arab philosophy, and was even familiar with Christian scholastic literature. Later Solomon Halevi developed worldly ambitions, engaged in government business like other members of his family, and kept "a carriage, horses and footmen," like government officials and courtiers. His rise to eminence seems to have been rapid. In 1389, he participated in a Castilian diplomatic mission to Aquitaine of France, which was then under English rule. From there, on the holiday of Purim, he wrote a letter to the Rab Don Meir Alguadex in a spirit of jesting appropriate to the festival:

When the Lord cast me out from my fathers house, and my sins drove me out from abiding in the inheritance of my forefathers, and there where the king's prisoners are imprisoned I was thrust into the pit [i.e., he was imprisoned in the king's service], then did I see many terrible happenings . . . but all this means nothing to me when I reflect upon that which my tender soul hath suffered because of the inadequate observance of the commandments required of it. . . . Here I sit apart from the camp of the *Shekhinah*, Levites and Israel, and even those commandments which can be performed in private and of which one makes little, such as *kiddush* and *havdalah*, I have not had the benefit of these many days.

This letter should not be studied for auguries of the writer's eventual conversion and tragic political fate. Yet, in his levity, we may detect the melancholy frame of mind of this relatively young Jew—he was still under forty years of age—who found himself, for the first time in his life, among Gentiles on a Jewish festival and who, like some of the other courtiers, was unable to observe the Jewish rites in due form. In any event, the affairs that bore Don Solomon Halevi so far away from the Jewish camp (“the camp of the *Shekhinah*,” to use his own term) on this occasion were of no ordinary significance. Negotiations were then under way for the signing of an armistice between England and France, the political ally of Castile. It is very likely that Solomon Halevi had opportunities there to meet leading European diplomats and the great Christian theologians who were then attempting to compose the schism in the Church.

A short time later, Solomon Halevi, in his fortieth year, converted to Christianity together with his children. It seems that his wife converted at a later date. The brothers of the new Paul were converted together with their famous brother. According to a late Christian tradition, Paulus was baptized at Burgos on the 21st of July, 1390. But this tradition may be wrong, and it is more likely that the baptism took place on the 21st of July, 1391, in the midst of the great persecution. In any event, the apostasy of Solomon Halevi of Burgos was connected with and symptomatic of the general destruction, either at the point when it had already begun, or when it was approaching and showing its first signs.

R. Solomon, now Paul, went to Paris for the purpose of completing his studies in Christian theology, and at Avignon he became friendly with Cardinal Pedro de Luna, who ascended the papal throne several years later (in 1394) as Benedict XIII. Very soon the apostate revealed himself as an enemy of his people and ancestral religion, at first in Avignon and later in Aragon, where he tried to persuade

King John to enact anti-Jewish legislation. He also tried to force his former friend, R. Hasdai Crescas, to engage in a religious disputation with him; but for the moment the influence of the Jewish philosopher at court sufficed to set at naught the designs of the new Christian theologian. All these events occurred in the years 1391–1394. Later Paul returned to Castile and rose rapidly in the ecclesiastical hierarchy until he was appointed bishop of Burgos. We shall learn presently from Joshua Halorki the reasons that might have impelled a man like Solomon Halevi to change his fundamental outlook and his whole way of life with such rapidity.

A wider basis for understanding the revolutionary change in Solomon is to be found in the books written by Paulus de Sancta Maria himself in his old age—the polemical work entitled *Scrutinium Scripturarum* and his addenda to the biblical commentary of Nicolaus de Lyra. It is admittedly not easy to discern in these orthodox writings of Paul's old age traces of his development during the years of his conversion and baptism. In any case, he should not be looked upon merely as a careerist whose actions were in no wise influenced by study and religious considerations. When he returned from France, his admirers claimed that he had “made discoveries and formulated mighty hypotheses” about the movements of the heavenly bodies. His chief preoccupation was not, however, with the physical sciences, but with problems of theology. Even in the books which he wrote late in life, his extensive knowledge of the Talmud and the works of the commentators (Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Nachmanides) and also, of course, of Maimonides, is still apparent. His guides in the art of polemic were the works of Raymond Martini and of his own fellow-townsmen, Abner of Burgos (Alfonso de Valladolid). He had doubtless heard much about Abner from his family and older contemporaries, and he quotes copiously from Abner's books, though he does not always

mention the source. There is undoubtedly a grain of truth in the Christian tradition that the works of Thomas Aquinas were the decisive factor in Solomon Halevi's to adopt Christianity. And it was not by chance that he chose the name of Paul the Apostle, whose doctrine of faith and predestination (divine foreordination) was very congenial to his own way of thinking. Paul in thought was opposed to Averroism, as Solomon Halevi pointed out in his letter to Joshua Halorki.³⁸

A short time—it may have been only a few days—after his conversion, Paul of Burgos mentioned in a letter to Joseph Orabuena that he had come to the conclusion that the messianic prophecies had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. This letter was circulated among the Jews, and may have been written with that object in mind. When Joshua Halorki read Paul's letter, he wrote at once to his former friend, expressing astonishment at what he had done, but at the same time confiding that he, too, had religious doubts. He attempted to define the reasons why Jews converted to Christianity, and enumerated four factors that might have prompted his friend's action:

Did you perchance lust after riches and honors? . . . Or did the study of philosophy cause you to change so radically and to regard the proofs of faith as vanity and delusion, so that you therefore turned to things more apt to gratify the body and satisfy the intellect without fear and anxiety and apprehension? Or, when you beheld the doom of our homeland, the multitude of the afflictions that have recently befallen us, which ruined and destroyed us, the Lord having almost turned away His countenance from us and given us for food to the fowl of the air and the beasts of the field—did it then seem to you that the name of Israel would be remembered no more? Or perhaps the secrets of prophecy have been revealed to you and the principles of faith—matters not revealed to the great pillars of faith whom

we had with us in all the ages of our Exile; and you saw that our fathers had inherited falsehood, that they had but little comprehension of the intent of the Torah and the Prophecy, and you chose what is true and established?

These were the four possible reasons for conversion, some or all of which motivated the majority of intellectual converts. Apart from material considerations, it was the Averroist outlook that in the main prompted the philosophers to choose the easiest way. Moreover, there was the appalling national disaster, a consideration which was in itself enough to turn the scales with free thinkers who had long held equivocal opinions. Even among men whose faith in their God was unimpaired, there were some who could not but open their ears to the thunder of history. The fearful disaster that had overwhelmed the Spanish community, then the largest segment of the Jewish people, seemed to betoken to all the world that God had withdrawn His favor from the Jews and left them a prey to the perversity of the times. The fourth reason—the revelation of the Christian truth in the Torah and the Prophets—was the end of the road for all the converts, whether or not they had been influenced by any of the other factors, and whether or not they had been baptized willingly. And just as Halorki's questions explain the general attitudes of the converts of 1391 in general, so is his reply instructive in regard to those Jews whom the first chapter of the national tragedy had for the moment not led beyond uncertainty and confusion of mind. The first reason is waved aside by Joshua himself as inapplicable. When he had last seen his friend (as usual, at a wedding in the home of an acquaintance in Burgos), he had found Solomon preoccupied with affairs of State and comporting himself like a courtier. Then Solomon had whispered to him: "I regret these imaginary successes; they are vanity and works of delusion . . . Would that I had that little chamber on the roof which was

my retreat when first I studied diligently day and night.” Such expressions of yearning could convince only a man who, blind to the faults of his friend, judged him by his words and not by his deeds. Joshua believed Solomon because he found him “steadfast in his faith and scrupulously observing the commandments.” Nor did he suspect his friend of Averroistic tendencies: “Also of philosophy thou didst eat the kernel and cast away the shells,”—a general statement that does not convince us. As for the destruction of a whole segment of the Jewish people, he asserts as a well-known and accepted fact that “this day the majority of our people is in Babylon and Yemen,” apart from the independent Jewish tribes described in travellers’ tales. “And this being the case, even if it be divinely decreed that all the Jews living among the Christians should perish, the Jewish people as such will remain whole, and this will not cause trust in God to fail.” Halorki accordingly concludes that: “I can find in your case only the last reason, namely, examination and testing of the different religions and prophecies. Furthermore, I knew you delved into the hidden treasure of Christian books, commentaries and principles, having a mastery of their language, and there found many things not discerned by any of the Jewish scholars of our times.” Hence it is to be inferred that Solomon had given thought to Christian theology long before he was converted, and that Joshua Halorki, too, was keenly interested in that subject. He longs to listen to the doctrine of the apostate: “Would that, as aforetime, I could fly and dwell under the shadow of your rooftree, that you might teach and tell me what has been revealed to you of these foreign matters, one by one. Perchance you might still the tumult in my heart and resolve for me a multitude of doubts concerning these interpretations.” Joshua Halorki proceeds to set forth his arguments against the Christological interpretation of the messianic prophecies, and now, once more, he speaks as a devout Jew. He begins by discussing the “title and nature of

the redeemer.” The Messiah must be of the seed of David and a king in the literal sense of the term; “and though our adversaries say that he (Jesus) called himself King of Israel, how could he use that title when the Jews did not accept him and did not recognize him as their king? For, where there is no people, there is no king.”

In discussing the “matters that follow from these facts,” he enumerates eight conditions that must be met by a true Messiah: the redeemer must save his people and gather in all its dispersed members; he must re-settle Jerusalem and the Land of Israel and restore it to its former worldly splendor; he must spread his doctrine throughout the world, rebuild the sanctuary and restore the order of worship as in ancient times; after his advent “divine abundance and prophecy will increase in the world,” and there must be peace; and finally the battle of Gog and Magog must take place. Halorki then voices additional doubts concerning Christian doctrine: “How could *that man* abrogate and change the whole Torah?” And how could one accept the Christian doctrine of original sin and universal damnation until the advent of Jesus who atoned for these by his death? Most of the arguments advanced by Halorki were commonly used by Jewish scholars in their disputations. He employs conventional Jewish terminology in discussing Christianity and Jesus, and speaks of these matters as one Jew to another. The biblical prophecies are to be interpreted in their literal sense: in this respect he shows no disposition whatever to concede anything to the Christian faith. But he is very much attracted by those religious principles which the Christians hold to be beyond the reach of the human intellect: “And also concerning the Trinity, which the theologians make plausible by their marvellously delicate analysis of the Divinity, it should be said that this is an ancient belief which was held by some men even in the age of the prophets.” Halorki here quotes Aristotle, in an Arabic translation, about “the beginning of the

heavens and the earth,”—a passage used by Abner of Burgos in his day to demonstrate the doctrine of the Trinity.³⁹ It is clear that Joshua Halorki, like Solomon Halevi, had entered the “grove” of Christological homiletics by the method of Abner of Burgos, the outstanding apostate and master of all those Jewish intellectuals who longed for a new Torah. Yet, the religion of the intellect still took issue with this peculiar faith.

What think you of their assertion that he is the Messiah of flesh and blood, who eats and drinks, dies and lives again; and that he himself is the true God, the abundance of whose power moves the spheres, and the emanation of whose existence gives rise to the separate intellects?

Joshua also questions various points in the New Testament narrative. In spite of the many inconsistencies which the writer finds in Christian doctrine, he seems like a rower trying to make his way through a sea of doubts to the shores of Christianity, making use of the implements of philosophy which, in intellectual circles, were incessantly at war with convictions bred in the blood and bone of the Jewish people. After refuting most of the Christian doctrines with strong arguments, he once again raises the old question posed by Arab philosophers, which Jewish intellectuals were asking as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century: “Is it or is it not incumbent upon, or permissible for, a religious man, being a religious man, to investigate his religion and faith so as to determine whether it, or another, is the true one?” But if this is his duty, “then no religious man anywhere in the world would be faithful to his religion, but would be constantly doubting and questioning.” And if it is not permissible to probe into these matters, “it follows that any believer can be saved by his own religion, and that one religion is not superior to another”; in other words, all religions are equally able

to save the souls of their believers, or else believers in a false religion are foredoomed to Hell. But were that the case, “God would be perverting judgment.” And what of those who live in remote places and have never heard of other religions? And what of infants who have not sinned and have not yet attained to an understanding of religion? Joshua Halorki discussed these questions—theological problems then argued in all quarters—with Jewish and Christian scholars, but received no satisfactory answers. He therefore fumed to the friend of his youth asking whether anything new in these matters had been revealed to him; and, if he had written a book on the subject, to send it to him. He closed his letter with the following words: “As one who sits in fear and stands astonished, bound with the bonds of love to serve you.” Modern scholars have endeavored in vain to interpret this epistle as a satire on the famous apostate. The truth of the matter is that Joshua Halorki wrote as one whose faith had long before been undermined. This document reveals anew the character of those Averroist intellectuals who sought to enjoy all the cultural values and treasures of enlightenment, while their ties with the traditions of their own people slackened more and more. Eventually they turned to the Catholic Church which, though its principles, too, were irreconcilable with their religion of the intellect, nevertheless offered them a reasonably coherent system of dogmatics as well as a rich tradition of humanism and secular culture.

Of Solomon Halevi’s reply to Joshua Halorki only the last part has been preserved. It is likely that the foregoing paragraphs were destroyed by Jewish copyists who saw no point in handing down the details of his theological views. Halevi probably began by discussing the doctrine of the Christian Messiah, but refrained from answering most of Halorki’s arguments. His main concern was to determine in what respect it was the duty of a believer to search out and test the foundations of his faith; and, in spite of his difficult style, his an-

swer is clear.⁴⁰ All who adhere to the Mosaic religion, of which belief in the Messiah is a fundamental principle, are obliged to study the Written and Oral Law with a view to determining whether the Christian Messiah is the true Messiah. Such a study is not subversive of faith, but confirms it. “And this scrutiny is the door of hope through which I entered the New Covenant—I and my friends—and this is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous enter.” From this point of view it is not the duty of a believer in the Mosaic religion to investigate the religion of Islam. That “pseudo-religion” testifies against itself, its falsity being demonstrated by its powerlessness to convince. All those born into a false religion are under obligation, without fear of divine punishment, to test the truth of their faith. And since the Messiah has already come, the whole world is bound to live by his doctrine, as it is said: “And the isles shall wait for his teaching” (Isa. 42.4; see also Matt. 12.21). “And should it be asked: How, therefore, shall it be known whether the religion into which a man is born is false or not, seeing that each of these religions holds itself divine? The reply is as Maimonides of blessed memory wrote in Part II: Consider this well, for by this test shall we judge you.” Paul is referring to chapter 40 of the *Guide of the Perplexed*, part II, in which Maimonides sought a true criterion by which to demonstrate the truth of the Mosaic religion as compared to the religions which dissent from it; but the apostate uses Maimonides’ discussion to demonstrate the truth of his own Christian faith. Hence, he concludes, a Christian living in England, who never meets Jews and Moslems, is not obliged to examine the foundations of other religions. “But the Moslems are in duty bound to investigate the faith in the Messiah, which is obligatory upon all mankind.” Nevertheless, Paul holds that faith is not an act of human cognition, but a matter of Divine grace. Divine justice should not be impugned because infants die without faith. Their lack of faith does not consign them to damnation; it

simply means that they are withdrawn from the care of Divine Providence and possess neither merit nor demerit: “Just as according to your teacher, Averroes, the souls of the ignorant, who lack understanding, have no immortality at all!”—It was biting sarcasm on the part of the new Paul to add: “Your teacher Averroes”: the teacher of the Jewish intellectuals!—But in adults of normal mentality the lack of faith is a great sin, “because the desire to strive for immortality is implanted in every human heart”: in other words, in the heart of every man there is implanted a striving to understand the faith of spiritual redemption and to believe in it. The Christian scholars teach that “when a man of normal understanding examines sincerely and wholeheartedly seeks to find by the faith he may be saved, and does his diligent best in the matter, then the Lord, who knoweth the heart, will cause His face to shine upon him; and even though that man be at the end of the world, the Lord will not leave him out of His sight and will pour into his heart as much of His faith and His love as will be needed for his soul’s salvation; and if he does not go to holy water for lack of understanding, he will be purified by immersion in the Holy Spirit. But if he be negligent in this, he is a transgressor and will die in sin. For the ways of the Lord are righteous; and the just shall walk in them” (Hos. 14.10). With these words Solomon Halevi concludes his reply to Joshua Halorki, apologizing for his faulty Hebrew style, which is due to his current preoccupation with other matters. His object was primarily to advance the claims of faith, as viewed by Paul the Apostle, against his friend’s conception of the religion of the intellect.

PROFET DURAN

Under the influence of Paulus de Sancta Maria, Magister Bonet Bonjorn, a member of a well-known family of physicians in Perpignan, underwent conversion. The fact of

Bonet Bonjorn's apostasy is known to Hebrew literature through a pamphlet, "Be Not Like Thy Fathers," in which he was attacked by Magister Profet Duran (Isaac b. Moshe Halevi), author of *Ma'aseh Ephod*. According to an old tradition, these two friends were baptized during the disorders of 1391 and decided to journey to the Holy Land, so that they might return to Judaism and atone for their sin. But, before they could fulfill their vow, Bonet Bonjorn met Paulus de Sancta Maria at Avignon, and the latter won him over completely to the Christian faith. This tradition, which seems to have originated within a few generations after the event, is based partly on guesswork and erroneous reconstruction. Profet Duran remained in Catalonia and staunchly defended Judaism until 1414, when the disputations at Tortosa came to an end. He was among the associates, disciples and admirers of Rabbi Hasdai Crescas, though he was more inclined than his great master to take a middle course between tradition and philosophy, after the manner of Maimonides. He too represented a new trend of thought in the Jewish camp. In his style and in his views about the Hebrew language, the humanistic influence of his generation is obvious. His historical work, *Zikhron ha-Shemadoth*, (A Record of Persecutions) which we know only from quotations, shows him to be still faithful to the old concept of martyrology; and yet in a way it was an innovation for a Jewish author of that period to assemble data on the great religious persecutions and expulsions of Jews in the medieval Diaspora. In his book *Kelimath ha-Goyim* (The Confusion of the Gentiles), Duran based his criticism of Christian doctrine on a method of historical review, widely used for polemical purposes at the time of the schism in the Church, one of whose originators was Marsilius de Padua. The polemical epistle "Be Not Like Thy Fathers" is the earliest piece of writing by Duran which we possess, but the ideas set forth there were probably expressed by

him even before their publication. In all medieval Hebrew prose there is hardly another work with so concise, polished and direct a style. An inexperienced writer could not have produced such a masterpiece. It is inconceivable that a man who clung so loyally to his religion and fought on its behalf with such determination should, only a short time previously, have paid obeisance to alien gods. Nor is it likely that, were he a *converso*, the Church would have allowed him to live as a Jew, and to publish anti-Christian polemics over a period of twenty-five years. Towards the end of his epistle Duran himself vehemently protested against his friend's suggestion that he too embrace Christianity. To be sure, in a letter of condolence written in 1393 to a friend in Gerona on the death of his father, R. Abraham Halevi, he closed by saying:

This, my brother, I have seen fit to arrange . . . secretly and modestly, for the Lord my God hath put me to silence and given me water of gall to drink to repletion and satiety. The insolent waters have overwhelmed me, the stream has gone over my head—this malignancy . . . And it is the speaker's will that his soul, which is bound with yours, shall weep in secret, for behold, he is not of his faith, strange is his deed and alien his worship—your brother the Levite (Halevi) whose song has been spoilt, this is his name forever and his memory is concealed.”

We are unable to penetrate the obscurity of these remarks. Was the author of the *Ma'aseh Ephod* lamenting the general fate of his generation? Or was he haunted by youthful transgressions and heretical thoughts of which he could not wholly rid himself? ⁴¹

In his famous epistle Profet Duran contrasted St. Paul's doctrine of salvation by faith, which his friend upheld, with his own doctrine, which was accepted by devout Jewish intellectuals, that salvation is attained by a faith that ignores nei-

ther the demands of the intellect nor the observance of the commandments.

Lo, I have seen the flying scroll which reveals the secret of redemption; deep secrets are engraven therein, its promise proves true . . . And the essence of what I understand thereof is that thy fathers have inherited falsehood and pursued vanity; from too much questing their wisdom is become concealed, their sagacity stale, their hope disappointed, their salvation a lie; they thought to have ascended heavenward, but in their folly descended to the depths; they have sinned in their souls . . . Nor hath human intellect drawn thee to its dark abode, nor hast thou truly repented of good works; thou treat'st it [intellect] as a stranger, call'st it cruel viper, eternal enemy and injurer of true faith; [saying] that the fool saith that intellect and religion are two lights, for intellect with its logical analogies hath no part thereof, it knoweth not the path where light abideth, dark gloom dwelleth within it. Faith alone ascendeth on high and that the doubters are with the wicked in Hell, and that this is the meaning of the verse "The righteous shall live by faith" [as interpreted by Paul in Galatians, 3.12; Romans, 1.17; and Hebrew, 10.38]—assuming that he [Paul] hath rightly defined the Hebrew word faith [*emunah*], as thou and thy new mentor believe.

This belief in the superiority of Judaism, which was the creed of all simple Jews, was strengthened in Duran's case by his knowledge of philosophy. His faith in the election of Israel, unshaken by all the storms of persecution, was strengthened by his identification of normative Jewish tradition with rationalistic philosophy. He was not one of those intellectuals who despised their heritage, or whose souls were half-consumed by despair; he stood steadfast in the midst of the turbulent waves of bestiality, deceit and disloyalty. Hence the passionate, scornful irony pervading his epistle: "Be not like thy fathers who believed only in a God

of simple unity . . . but do thou otherwise! Believe He is one and three!" In such caustic antitheses Duran scoffed at St. Paul's belief in salvation by faith, and at the Christian dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, redemption of the soul, eternal damnation, trans-substantiation, and the cult of saintly relics. He also derided the doctrine of spiritual liberation from the yoke of the commandments. His critical method was, as he was to develop it more fully at a later time in his book *Kelimath ha'Goyim*, historical as well as dialectical. In his polemical epistle, however, Duran confined himself to summarizing very briefly what he was to elaborate and elucidate at length in the book. He realized that it was useless to labor the point in the epistle, which he ended with the following words:

It is to this, my brother, that I wish to direct your attention, knowing that you love truth for truth's sake . . . You have not been beguiled by worldly pleasures, nor have you been led astray by their vanity, ensnared by their perversity, or entrapped by their duplicity. You have walked simply in the path of faith, faith in the Messiah; in his light shall you see light, and you shall prosper in all your undertakings! Take no heed of the humiliation, poverty and abjectness that cleave to the soul and the degradation that your enemies fling in your face and that creeps before them as a snail that melteth while they say of you the livelong day: "Yesterday's convert! Renegade! Circumcized one!" Let it suffice you that your soul will remain forever in a state of bliss beyond all imagining!

Profet Duran sneered at the praises which Bonet Bonjorn lavished upon his teacher, Paul of Burgos, whom he revered as if he were the pope, and twitted him with a reference to the schism in the Catholic Church.

And, my brother, what you have also written, marvelling and dilating upon the virtues of your master—his per-

fections, and his magnificence, saying that he was born in the image and likeness of God and speaking of him as the pope—has made me wonder whether he will go to Rome or remain at Avignon.

Bonet Bonjorn asserted that “Maestre Paulus” had made some important discoveries in the field of physics.⁴² The king of Aragon, John I, presented him with a gift of money. But “the great Rabbi, the unique one in Israel,” Don Hasdai Crescas, refused to dispute with Paul, though confident of his ability to defeat him in argument. Despite all the to-do, Paul was unable to persuade the royal court of Aragon to take any effective measures against the Jews. He wished to preach anti-Jewish sermons at Avignon, but was prevented by the cardinal of Pamplona (Pedro de Luna, later anti-Pope Benedict XIII) and two other leading dignitaries of the Church; finally, the Jewish community of Avignon bribed him into silence. It was rumored that the pope intended to bestow an important bishopric upon Paulus de Sancta Maria, or to make him a cardinal. “Therefore, my brother, rejoice and be glad, for in his honors you too will be honored, and he will assuredly find a place for you in the hierarchy of the Church.” Lastly, Duran protests against Bonet Bonjorn’s assumption that he was dissuaded by an outside influence from embracing Christianity:

As for your idle exhortations that the footmen in my service perverted my thinking—I am astonished. You have always known that my intentions were good; my deeds show that I am at one with the Lord my God with all my heart and soul eternally. His righteous Messiah, who is called by His name, is my trust and hope. I have always held fast to this faith of mine, no ephemeral knowledge [?] has come into my possession, and I have not changed my views; what I believe now, I have believed these twenty [?] years. One thing I must ask of you: do not sign your works with the name of that es-

teemed scholar, your sainted father. Let not your soul come into his council and use not his name for your advancement for, were he living today, he would rather have chosen to have no son than such a one. And even now his soul mourns in his resting-place.

Profet Duran did not confine himself to polemics, but tried to inspire his people with the idea of national restoration. In the autumn (month of Marheshwan) of 1394 he wrote an “Epistle of Lamentation, Grief and Consolation” in memory of R. Abraham b. R. Isaac Halevi of Gerona, one of the foremost leaders of the Jewish population of Catalonia, and sent it to his son, En Josef Abraham, who had done much in 1391 to save the community in which he lived.⁴³ In this epistle Profet Duran describes the desperate situation of the Jewish people whose trials and sufferings had increased so greatly that it no longer was aware of the absence of its leaders and scholars: The righteous man was lost, but no one paid any heed (Isa. 57.1). Duran cries out to the deceased:

Heartache and a broken spirit at the sight of the over-
weening wickedness and the great and unparalleled af-
flictions have caused thee to be gathered to thy fathers.
With thine own eyes thou didst see the communities of
Castile and Catalonia ruined and despoiled, those com-
munities that were to the Jewish people as the princi-
pal members of the body to its other members. And thou,
even thou, wast appointed to drink the cup of the fury
of the Lord. Thy holy and splendid house and those
pearls, thy books, were given over to the flames, and all
thy goodly possessions were destroyed.

The cause of the widespread ruin, as Profet Duran saw it, lay in the fact that intentions and deeds were not completely fused with one another:

And I say that this was one of the causes for the absence of Providence and for the Lord’s turning away His coun-

tenance from us and for the enfeeblement of our people by fire and sword, captivity and despoliation, time after time in this long exile: I mean our dependence on works alone, divorced from true intentions. . . . It so happened that a certain aged philosopher was asked the reason for the ruin of his country, and he replied that it was due to three causes: first, that its leaders all chose the partial good and did not understand the principle of the whole; second, that some of its leaders hated some of the others; and third, that the leadership was entrusted to boorish men who were inexpert in the art of leadership . . . and all three of these causes have been responsible for much of our affliction in exile, particularly the choice of the partial good, each of us being concerned for himself alone and not knowing or understanding that in the long run the security of the parts depend on the security of the whole—and this is true of our people in particular, all of whose parts are answerable for one another. . . .

It was therefore fitting to mourn and bewail the departure of righteous men, scholars and leaders such as the deceased. The one consolation to be found was in the thought that the death of a righteous man atoned for the nation as a whole, particularly “When the righteous die the death of martyrs . . . martyrs of the Supreme God, thy friends . . . The pious rabbis, the three shepherds that were in Gerona . . . and the other martyrs who were there, and others wheresoever they died by fire and sword.” Duran then cites the words of the amora R. Yitzhak (Men. 53b) which, he believed, alluded to “a part of the seed of Abraham who were forced publicly to deny their faith and become converts in this great province.” He calls upon the *conversos* to repent without further procrastination or profession of despair.

The salvation and redemption that we hope for include all the seed of Abraham, both they upon whom apostasy was forced, so that they were broken and ensnared and

captured, and they who subscribe with their hand unto the Lord, and surname themselves by the name of Israel [i.e., the proselytes] (Isa. 44.5).

Referring to the prophet Ezekiel's pronouncement on the first Babylonian Captivity (Ezek. 20), Duran adds:

It is therefore meet that this long exile shall be prolonged, for if a part of the people has faltered under severe compulsion for fear of the heavenly decrees, not for this have they been excluded from the community of the people of the Lord and of the seed of Abraham His loving friend, for the Lord knoweth the secrets of their hearts, and in time to come He will redeem and carry and bear them for ever and ever, like unto their other brethren. . . . And He will be merciful unto His land and to His people; that is, it is His will that when they return to the land, the land shall atone for their sins.

In Deuteronomy, chapter 32, Profet Duran continues, there is an allusion "to the affliction that shall be the last to come upon this people and to the final redemption for which we hope; and the increase and severity of the affliction shall be an omen that healing salvation is at hand, in the manner envisioned by that great scholar, R. Judah Halevi, in his *Kusari*" (IV, 23). Here we have the first indications of the sort of national and religious propaganda which, in the period of the expulsion, was to become widespread among Jews and *conversos*.

EMIGRATION TO PALESTINE AND MESSIANIC UNREST

Emigration to Palestine, which in thirteenth-and-fourteenth-century Spain had been a matter for the select few, now became a great mass movement. A Christian ship which sailed from Barcelona to Alexandria and Beirut in 1392 was halted on the way, by order of the government, because there were *converses* on board. Among the *conversos* who jour-

neyed to the Holy Land from Majorca was the aged astronomer, Isaac Nifoci, to whom R. Simon b. Zemach Duran wrote:

As thou leav'st Seir,* and so in striding forth dost save thy soul from direst netherworlds and from conversion, then beginnest thou thyself to purify in God's commandments, for on His beauteous mount ** wilt thou shake off the yoke of fate . . . Ever higher shalt thou ascend and firmer established be, until thou shall see, in captivity, the King *** in all His splendor, and the beauty of his ornament, and the poor man who rideth on the donkey † . . . Jerusalem, a peaceful habitation, thine eyes shall see.

Jews from Castile also passed through Aragon on their way to the ports of Catalonia and Valencia, from which they sailed for Palestine. The *aljama* of Saragossa, which was engaged at the time in issuing “journeyer's letters” to all the needy and oppressed, gave out numerous letters of recommendation, particularly to those who were about to emigrate to the Holy Land. It is quite probable that the substance and phrasing of such letters derived from the school of R. Hasdai Crescas in Saragossa.⁴⁴

In contrast to the educated classes, which fell easy prey to despair, the masses were agitated by messianic visions. Unfortunately, only fragmentary echoes of these developments have come down to us. In 1416, a Jewish apostate of Toledo, Maestre Juan *el viejo* (the Elder), wrote a book about the Christian faith in which he made mention of eschatological calculations that had been proven false. A Jewish scholar by the name of R. Isaac Abendino (a Jew of the same name in Aragon was the father-in-law of Don Alazar Golluf and a friend of

* Christian Spain

** Mount Zion

*** The Messiah

† The Messiah.

R. Hasdai Crescas) claimed that the Messiah would appear in 1391, basing his assertion on a numerological exegesis (*gematria*) of the verse in Habakkuk 2.3, “For the vision is yet for the appointed time.” In comment on this, Maestre Juan said: “In that same year the Messiah came to us by force, and we were brought into the fold of the Holy Catholic Church; for on the day when a man’s understanding comes to full maturity—on the selfsame day—the Messiah comes to him” (according to the doctrine of Abner of Burgos).⁴⁵ Concerning the messianic movement in Spain, there exists a badly preserved letter⁴⁶ of the year 1392/93 which refers to reports from the island of Corfu (if the text has been correctly deciphered) and to letters sent by R. Hasdai Crescas from Tunis. R. Hasdai reacted favorably towards letters coming from Burgos which told of revelations and future wonders disclosed by a prophet named Moses, who had revealed himself somewhere in that vicinity and was predicting “signs and wonders” to come in the month of Nisan (April/May; presumably the Nisan immediately following the disturbances of 1391). This prophet seems to have begun his work in the autumn of 1391 while the disturbances were still in progress. The information in the manuscript seems to have been based on accurate reports around which, however, a body of vague legendary material grew up. R. Hasdai Crescas was *not* in Tunis at the time. Detailed data at hand show that he was in Aragonia almost every month during the years 1391–1393. But there is evidence to support the manuscript, too. For, when the disputation began in Tortosa, Hieronymus de Sancta Fide declared that, whereas the Christians believed that the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, the Jews believed that he could appear anywhere in the world: Rabbi Akiba had recognized a Messiah from the town of Betar; in the age of Maimonides it was reported that the Messiah had appeared in Yemen: “and in our day R. Hasdai Crescas has announced a report and preached to congregations in the synagogues that the

Messiah was born in Cisneros, in the Kingdom of Castile” (a small village in the Province of Palencia). Rumors of this sort are also mentioned in an authentic letter that has come into our possession, from which, however, all proper names have been deleted. It reads, in part, as follows:

And so as to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees, our teacher [apparently Hasdai Crescas], may God preserve him, explained that these calamities shall serve as a preliminary to the coming of the Messiah, after the manner of labor pains, which are a preparation for and a preliminary to birth. Then made they a proclamation in the camp of the Hebrews and sent forth books on eagles’ wings, that the appearance of our salvation was nigh, our tenfold redemption; that soon the Lord would cry, yea, roar—yea, shout out—mirth and gladness in the cities of Judah and that all the people would perceive the thundering voice. This one writes about the Lord’s Messiah that He shall surely come by Passover time, and that one says, behold, he stands already at our walls, tomorrow he shall perform among us wonders and propitious signs, and our enemies shall clothe themselves in disgrace and recoil under disaster before the wrath of the Lord of Hosts; another declares that if the Feast of Tabernacles should arrive and there is yet no Messiah, then surely it is God’s will to have us die and to harden out heart from His fear; but before he has done talking yet another comes and says, it is rumored that a prophet has risen in Israel who has seen a vision of the Almighty; unto us is born a child who perceives the future and discloses dark secrets, to whom the spirit of knowledge is come from Mount Paran, to whom, in a land of exile and darkness, the Lord revealed Himself in a dream at night and assured him of great amelioration: misery and grief shall flee, the years wherein we have seen evil shall be no more: lo, this presages good, this proclaims salvation.

The writer serves notice to the receiver and sends him copies of letters concerning the same, so that he would act

against the harmful and sinful activities of these visionaries, and tell the people not to rely on their way of calculating the coming of the Redemption, but keep their belief in the redeemer unshattered and intact.⁴⁷

The prophet in question was in all likelihood one of the many such men who appeared in Burgos and Palencia. In their activities they bore resemblance to the prophets of a century before, who had called upon the communities of Castile to repent and be saved. The letter was meant, it would seem, for R. Hasdai Crescas, who, unlike the more cautious R. Solomon Adret, was disposed to lend credence to popular prophecies.

An indication of the then current interest in the political status of Palestine is to be found in Hasdai Crescas' book *Or Adonai* ("The Light of the Lord"). In discussing the period of the Second Temple, in which messianic prophecies remained unfulfilled, R. Hasdai concurred with Nachmanides in asserting that there was then no true redemption, but only a remission (*pekidah*), for the Jews were still enslaved under the yoke of the Gentiles: "As for the Second Temple, it was as if the King of Egypt, who now reigns over the land of Israel, were to grant permission to Jews living elsewhere in his empire to go and rebuild the sanctuary, on the condition that they submit to his rule."⁴⁸

R. HASDAI CRESCAS AND HIS *OR ADONAI*

R. Hasdai Crescas published his *Or Adonai* in 1410, shortly before his death. The life of this man of genius was inextricably bound up with an entire epoch in Jewish political and religious history. R. Hasdai Crescas was devoted to public affairs not only in his actions, but in his ways of thought. Unlike Maimonides, he was sympathetic to popular religious lore and custom. Enrique de Villena, the learned Maestre de Calatrava (1384–1434), relates that R. Hasdai Crescas treated the sick with amulets. R. Joseph Ya'abetz wrote of him: "The

Rabbi was the greatest philosopher of his day, even among the Christian and Moslem scholars, let alone the Jewish ones. And he was great unto his God, for he called unto Him and He answered with choruses of myriads of peoples; and God's name was sanctified by him, for [through him] many of the great men of the kingdom were inwardly Judaized . . . And he was the greatest of all the king's councillors, for the king did not lift up his hand to do anything, small or great, without him." This probably refers to R. Hasdai's association with John I, which we were able to clarify. R. Hasdai's punctilious observance of religious law is borne out by his petition to the king in 1393, at a time when he was preoccupied with the problem of restoring the ruined communities, to be allowed to take a second wife because his first wife had ceased to bear children. His prose style was concise, and so—as we learn from one of his disciples—was his manner of speaking.⁴⁹ For all that, we may assume that he was an effective enough speaker to be able to subdue both the aristocratic and educated elements, both Jewish and Christian, and to win the hearts of the artisans and humble folk. Even now the reader is made aware of his terse and vigorous command of language. His great philosophical treatise, excellent though small, is to this day examined for its profoundly original ideas by students of the history of philosophy. Though seemingly all abstract theory, the book was in fact devoted to the fateful struggles of R. Hasdai's generation. He fought the conversionist trend among the Jews with polemical writings against Christianity, which were composed either by him or at his suggestion. His *Or Adonai*, too, was written with the object of combating one of the chief causes of conversion, the philosophy of Averroism, which is to say, "the Greek [Aristotle] who has dimmed the eyes of Israel in these our times."

The *Or Adonai* presents us with an outline of Averroist thought, according to which there was no personal Providence, and the world was governed by eternal natural laws,

those of astrology in particular; man had no freedom of choice; there was “neither judge nor judgment”; the ultimate object of mankind was not observance of the commandments, but only knowledge; men did not achieve immortality except in so far as the intellect “acquires reality through the concepts”; and the Jewish people was not under the care of Divine Providence, nor was there any meaning in its history and suffering, nor had it any future. These ideas harmed the Jews not only directly but indirectly. Outsiders and enemies thought that philosophical rationalism was the real Jewish faith. Men seeking salvation for their souls hoped to find their hearths desire in Christianity, which was expounded to the people by great popular orators and highly cultured humanists. Paul and Augustine triumphed over Averroes. Over against these two trends the champions of Judaism were obliged, directly, to refute the views of the Jewish Averroists, and, indirectly, to demonstrate to the world the beauty and greatness of Mosaic Law, which, rather than Pauline faith, refuted Averroism and philosophical materialism. The *conversos* who warred against Jewish skepticism in the name of Christianity made full use of the approach of their master, Abner of Burgos, whose books and sayings were known to all. Anyone who took it upon himself to dispute with these *conversos* was first of all obliged to reply to Abner’s arguments.

In order to demonstrate that it was Judaism rather than Christianity which had the power to save through faith and observance of the commandments, R. Hasdai Crescas copied passages and even whole pages from Abner’s works, departing only occasionally from the latter’s text. His method resembles and moves dangerously close to that of his opponent. On the question of freedom of will, he accepted Abner’s position—which seems later to have been generally adopted by Jewish intellectuals—that everything, even the “fear of heaven,” is in God’s hands (cf. Berakhot 33b). Faith itself comes to man of necessity and “by decree.” Nevertheless, R. Hasdai did not

succumb to absolute determinism, but rather stressed freedom of choice and the rewards attendant on faith, “which result in the joys and pleasures that result from our diligent efforts to attain it”; “and this is the pleasure and joy that are ours when the Lord in His grace doth bestow His faith upon us.”

Similarly, in dealing with the problem of the teleological aim of Torah, mankind and the world, R. Hasdai sought to escape from the rationalistic trap; the solution he found was in an “element, quantitatively small but qualitatively great, which is neither absolutely an idea nor absolutely an action, namely, the love of God and true fear of Him.” Similarly, he held that men achieved prophecy not by natural and intellectual gifts alone; the decisive element is a “strong yearning to summon others to the service of the Lord.” Hence, even after prophecy ceased in Israel, there were men who almost reached the stature of prophets. This was the general tenor of R. Hasdai’s teachings, which will not be exhaustively examined here because they require expert treatment, but will be discussed only so far as is necessary for an understanding of a great chapter in the history of the Jewish people.

By the intellectual standards of the time, which was one of senescent scholasticism and new-born humanism, R. Hasdai succeeded in validating the Torah and the tradition and in depicting them in their true grandeur. He insisted that the Law, prophetic books, and rabbinic homilies are to be interpreted literally, and that the Torah and its commandments, reward and punishment, the merit of the patriarchs, God’s choice of the Holy Land, and the special destiny and mission of the Jewish people, were actual, rather than allegorical, truths. For the irresolute, whether intellectuals or common folk, he revived beliefs that the Jewish people had clung to for generations: that little school-children are worthy of immortality as soon as they have learned to say “Amen”; that one hour of repentance and good deeds outweighs all contemplative learning; that martyrs for their faith are so exalted that no

creature is able to come into their presence; and that denunciators and informers who forsake their people in its hour of need have no share in the world-to-come. All this R. Hasdai assiduously managed to demonstrate, not, however, without involving himself in modes of thought with which he himself was at variance. Could the ancient prophets of Israel, or Rabbi Akiba and his associates, have looked down from heaven upon the struggles of their posterity in the Spanish Exile, they would doubtless have felt love, compassion and astonishment at the sight of this faithful man, a unique figure in Israel in the waning days of the Middle Ages.⁵⁰

VINCENT FERRER AND THE OPPRESSIVE LEGISLATION OF 1412

Meanwhile, a popular preacher of penitence had arisen among the Christians in the person of Vincent Ferrer. He persuaded Christians to repent and attracted wavering Jews to the baptismal font. In the years 1411/12, he toured the cities of Castile and preached to great numbers of people. By his own testimony, he did not desire sanguinary outbreaks or compulsory conversions, but in fact he forced the Jews to attend his sermons, while his malevolent references to them stirred up Christian hatred and fanaticism. The bands of flagellants who accompanied him, scourging themselves as they walked, so terrified the Jews that they fled for their lives at their approach. In several localities the monk himself entered synagogues and dedicated them to the Christian ritual.⁵¹ At the time when Ferrer came to Castile the country had no king—Henry III had died in 1406—and the affairs of the government were administered by a regency, acting on behalf of the young king, John II, which was headed by the queen mother, Dona Catalina, and the Infante Don Fernando de Antequera. In 1410, Don Fernando was chosen, at the suggestion of Vincent Ferrer, as king of Aragon after the death of King Martin I. Paulus de Sancta Maria, the converted Jew, since 1406

Bishop of Burgos and chancellor of Juan II, exerted great influence on the Church politics of Castile and on the government's joining the obedience of Benedict XIII. We may assume that he looked favorably towards the anti-Jewish laws of the following years, but there is no proof of his taking an active part in formulating them. In any case, the Castilian government pursued an overtly "antisemitic" policy.

In 1408, a law was enacted to exclude Jews from tax farming and all other services of the state and court; this law was probably enforced.⁵² Vincent Ferrer submitted a comprehensive plan for changing the status of the Jews. Upon his advice the Jews were forced, whenever he came to a locality, to give up their homes in the central parts of the city among the Christians. The evictions were carried out with the utmost brutality. Filthy and unsanitary quarters were assigned to the Jews, and they were ruthlessly forced out of their homes even if no other dwelling places were available for them at the moment. The monk-preacher's tour of Castile gave rise to many conversions and to the dissolution of communities that had still maintained themselves or been strengthened during the previous twenty years. Now came the turn of the communities of Leon, which had escaped destruction in 1391. On January 2, 1412, in accordance with the program of Vincent Ferrer, the government of Castile promulgated in the city of Valladolid "reformatory laws" concerning the Jews. The aims of the Church Militant and of the Estates were merged with the object of undermining the economy of the Jews, abolishing the political freedom of their communities and reducing them to the status of pariahs. The way the law was worded, it appeared to be directed against both Jews and Moslems, but its content was aimed chiefly against the former. The Jews were to be confined to separate quarters in all the cities and villages so that they could have no social intercourse with the Christians or take part in their festivities and the like. They were also ordered to differen-

tiate themselves from the Christians by their modest mode of dress; to let their hair and beards grow long; and not to be called by Christian names or addressed by the courtesy title of “Don.” The anti-Jewish social regulations were paralleled by economic ordinances. The Jews were not permitted to engage in tax-farming or to hold posts in the government or at the royal and princely courts. Jewish physicians were not allowed to treat Christian patients. Jewish pharmacists and merchants were forbidden to sell drugs or food-stuffs to Christians. Jewish artisans (blacksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, etc.) might not serve Christian customers. Furthermore, Jews were forbidden to act as brokers and money-changers on behalf of Christians. Hardly a vocation or profession was left open to the Jews. The framers of the law obviously intended to degrade the Jews to the status of “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for the Christians, in the spirit of the monkish policy, which was first expressed in the thirteenth century and which was initially carried into effect chiefly in France and Germany. Taking interest was probably forbidden by special legislation. The laws of Valladolid did not forbid the Jews to buy land, but they were not allowed to have their estates cultivated by Christian tenant-farmers or farm laborers. Finally, the law proposed to abolish the autonomy of the communities—the right of exercising judicial authority and administering taxes. The function of judging Jews—to be sure, under Jewish law—was entrusted to Christian *alcaldes* (government or municipal officials, depending on the locality). The legislators did not intend to bring about the physical destruction of the Jews, but merely to convert them to Christianity by means of servitude and oppression. Accordingly, the Jews were forbidden to travel abroad or to move from royal to baronial estates, where the law had not the same force. Violation of any of the provisions of this law was punishable by confiscation of property and slavery. The banishment of the Jews from Castile, which

would have been the only means of achieving the object defined in the preamble to the law, namely, to remove the old and new Christians from the range of Jewish influence, was not considered at the time. Generally speaking, there is hardly a trace of a uniform purpose or of a definite program in the various provisions of the laws of Valladolid; nor was it possible everywhere to enforce them all in the same degree.

The laws of Valladolid were promulgated in June of the same year (1412) in the city of Cifuentes in a new version which was milder in several respects. Communal autonomy was restored to the Jews, and the provisions abolishing home rule were superseded by others resembling the laws of Soria of 1380, which only forbade the Jews to exercise criminal jurisdiction. Even after all the outrages to which the Jews had been subjected, it was not considered possible to hand over their communities to the municipal officials. Freedom of movement was also restored to the Jews; this was something in which the nobles had an interest, as they wished the Jews to be able to settle on their estates. Certain concessions were also made to the Jews in the economic sphere. In particular, Jewish landowners were permitted to employ Christian laborers on their estates. Actually, only two major provisions of the law were carried into effect, namely, the removal of the Jews to separate quarters, and their exclusion from tax farming and from the service of the State and the court.⁵³

From Castile, Vincent Ferrer returned to Aragon, bringing with him the new anti-Jewish laws he had drafted. In Majorca, these laws were introduced in the Cifuentes version, with the addition of a characteristic provision that forbade converts to travel to and fro from Berbery, the coast of North Africa, and instructed royal officials to assist the inquisitors in the examination of *conversos*. This was the beginning of the Inquisition's activity against the *conversos* in particular. Vincent Ferrer continued to tour the cities of Aragon, preaching his sermons and establishing both actual and theoretical barriers between the Jews and the Christians.⁵⁴

THE DISPUTATION AT TORTOSA (1413–1414)

THE PREPARATIONS

At the end of June, 1412, Fernando de Antequera was elected king of Aragon in the castle of Caspe. Vincent Ferrer, who was the decisive influence in this election, at once resumed his activity against the Jews of Aragon. In August, Ferdinand entered Saragossa as king, and on September 2, he passed on to the *hombres-buenos* (leading citizens) of another town of Aragon—apparently Alcañiz—the complaints of its Jewish community, stating that after Maestre Vincent Ferrer had left the town, its leading citizens had made new orders concerning Jews the like of which had never been heard of before, and that Jews are afraid to show themselves in the

streets. The king warned the leading citizens to treat the Jews according to their rights, as special subjects of the king, and if Maestre Vincent Ferrer made special regulations concerning the Jews, the citizens must bring them before the king for ratification.

It seems that in those days Vincent Ferrer met Joshua Halorki, the pope's physician, in Alcañiz, his birthplace. Fray Vincent then persuaded Joshua to embrace Christianity, and the apostate assumed the name Hieronymus de Sancta Fide. It is almost certain that this was that same Joshua Halorki who had written to Paulus de Sancta Maria the letter discussed above, in which he disclosed his religious doubts.¹ Up to the time of his conversion, he was still on terms of friendship with Don Benvenist de la Cavalleria. For almost twenty years he had wrestled with his own spirit before coming to a final decision. But then he proceeded immediately to attack his old friends and the religion of his youth. In August 1412, he handed to the anti-Pope Benedict XIII a short treatise, written in Latin and Hebrew, which was later to serve as the sourcebook for a disputation between him and his fellow-Jews. In the main, Halorki's treatise consisted of a collection of strongly biased Christological midrashic homilies which had been assembled since the days of Raymond Martini. Hieronymus, however, showed not a trace of the originality and ardor that had distinguished Maestre Alfonso de Valladolid. As the pope himself remarked some time later, it was originally intended to arrange a disputation on a modest scale at Alcañiz, Hieronymus's birthplace. Against his own wishes—perhaps because the small Jewish community of Alcañiz sought to enlist the aid of the greatest scholars and leaders—the pope felt it necessary to invite the whole Jewish population of Aragon to a religious disputation. Late in November 1412, each Jewish community of Aragon and Catalonia received a command in writing from the pope to send, no later than January 15, 1413, two or four

scholars to the papal court at Tortosa in order to receive instruction in the Christian faith.² It is difficult to decide whether it was the apostate or the pope who conceived the idea of this disputation. Benedict XIII (Pedro de Luna), who was elected pope by the college of cardinals at Avignon (during the period of schism in the Church) took up his residence in his native Aragon. He had long given thought to the propagation of Christianity among the Jews. While still a cardinal, he had had arguments on religion with R. Shemtob b. Isaac Shaprut. In the inventory of his library, which is still extant, there are listed various treatises “against the Jews,” including Raymond Martini’s *Pugio Fidei* (“Dagger of the Faith”) and the *Mostrador de Justicia* of Alfonso de Valladolid.³ The pope and his cardinals (one of whom was a converted Jew) supervised the arrangements for the disputation and themselves took part in it, though they had far more vital problems to concern themselves with at the time in the light of the general political situation in the Church. During the last stages of the disputation, Benedict’s papal authority was questioned by the Ecclesiastical Council at Constance. Nevertheless, the aged zealot was determined to complete this deed which, so he believed, came to his hand by the will of Providence, with the same obstinacy with which he clung to his papal office. Benedict was resolved to convert the Jews of Aragon, already decimated by the sword, by means of “instruction” and other forms of persuasion. It is likely that this is what the Dominicans had in mind when, in the 1260’s and 1270’s, they launched their disputations and sermons against the Jews. Then, however, certain considerations of policy had frustrated their designs. Now Aragonese Jewry was feeble and exhausted, and there was no king to protect it as in the reigns of James I and Pedro III. Ferdinand I, having ascended the throne of Aragon thanks to Vincent Ferrer’s very active intervention, could not do otherwise than assist the Churchmen. Thus there unfolded before

the eyes of the whole world a dramatic spectacle unique in the annals of religious debates between Judaism and Christianity.

The course of the disputation was determined in advance by the political situation. There were still some Jewish scholars competent to step into the breach. R. Hasdai Crescas had died in 1410, and Benvenist de la Cavalleria, the last Aragonese Jew to wield political influence, passed away in 1411. Nevertheless, there still remained among the associates and disciples of Hasdai Crescas a number of excellent talmudists and scholars who were conversant in some degree with the secular learning of the day, including Latin-Christian scholasticism. To Tortosa, the community of Saragossa sent R. Zerahia Halevi (R. Ferrer Saladin), fragments of whose responsa and sermons have come down to us; R. Mattityahu Hayitzhari, author of a commentary on Psalm 119, which contains some references to the disputation; and R. Moses aben Abez, a talmudist, poet and communal leader whose name has already been mentioned several times above. The community of Daroca was represented by R. Joseph Albo, who later wrote his book entitled *Sefer ha'Ukkarim* ("Book of Principles"). From Alcañiz, the birthplace of Joshua Halorki, came an impassioned orator, R. Astruc Halevi, whose interesting personality is known to us only from the records of the debate. From Gerona, in the company of several scholars, came Bonjudah Yehasel Hakaslari, the esteemed grandson of a famous physician. That great controversialist, Profet Duran, was also among those present; but we do not know what his official function was, nor whom he represented. Also present was the poet Solomon Bonafed, who has left us in his poems an account of what went on behind the scenes. The rabbis, who acted as the official spokesmen, were accompanied by the political leaders and intellectuals of the communities. The spectacle staged at Tortosa resembled in many respects the great assembly of political and spiritual leaders of Europe

who gathered at about the same time at Constance in order to settle important problems of religious policy or merely observe the proceedings out of curiosity. The Jewish scholars assembled at Tortosa were well versed in the subject-matter to be discussed and in the methods of argumentation with Christians. Men like Isaac Abravanel, who later criticized the Jewish arguments as feeble, had not read the actual records of the discussions, and drew their information from inadequate sources. To be sure, the free speech that flared up so vigorously and violently behind the scenes was muted and restrained at the official sessions, which took place in an irksome atmosphere of political pressure and moral coercion. No Jew at Tortosa would venture, in the pope's presence, to adopt a tone as aggressive as R. Moses b. Nachman's when he debated with an apostate in the presence of the king and the famous theologians of the day. Since then one hundred and fifty years had passed in the annals of scholasticism, which had meanwhile further developed methods of applying the casuistries of formal syllogistic argumentation; and since then, too, the whole political status of Spanish Jewry had been undermined.⁴

THE DISPUTATION ON THE MESSIANIC DOCTRINE

The official invitations to the disputation at Tortosa set the opening date for January 15, 1413. According to another source, the Jews had already appeared at the papal court on January 1; but the disputation was opened only on February 7. Several weeks were probably spent in negotiations between the Jews, the papal court and the king. The Jews tried hard, by means of bribery and formal protest, to extricate themselves from the whole affair; but the pope was not to be deflected from his purpose. The day before the disputation was opened, the Jewish representatives were received in audience by Benedict XIII. Their chief spokesman was Don Vidal b. Benvenist de la Cavalleria, a relatively young man, but well versed in court etiquette.

And his lordship the Pope received us courteously, and inquired what cities we came from and asked the name of each and every one of us, and commanded that it be written down, and this alarmed us exceedingly, and we inquired of the scribe what this might mean . . . And then the Pope said to us: “Ye notables of the Jewish people, a people, chosen by the Ancient Chooser and rejected for your own sins! Have no fear of the disputation; ye will meet with no guile or wrong whatsoever.” . . . and then he at once gave orders that we be suitably lodged, and that we be given of his food or whatsoever food we were permitted to eat by our religion.

The next day the pope revealed his real purpose . . .

And we found the whole large court arrayed in embroideries . . . and there were seventy seats for the dignitaries called cardinals and archbishops and bishops, all garbed in golden vestments. And all the great ones of Rome (the papal court) were there, and men from the city and princes, near unto a thousand men.

The pope repeated what he had already said in the invitations to the disputation: that this was *not* to be a disputation between two equal parties, but that it was proposed to prove the tenets of Christianity, which were beyond all doubt, from the Talmud. The pope then called upon Magister Hieronymus de Sancta Fide to speak.

Hieronymus based his opening address upon Isaiah 1. 18–21: “Come now, let us reason together. . . . But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword.” It would superficially seem, said the apostate, that the prophet addressed these words to his obdurate people; but, according to the “spiritual” interpretation, he was referring to the pope, who intended to convert the Jews, not against their will but by their own volition; not by force, but after due deliberation and in perfect freedom. It was his own intention to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and he would do so by means of a syllogism, thus: The Man in whom

the prophecies were fulfilled is the Messiah; the prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus: hence, Jesus is the Messiah. The “minor premise” alone remained to be demonstrated; the Jews would then be obliged to admit the truth of the Christian faith. To this end the apostate formulated twenty-four theses, to which the Jews had to reply. Hieronymus added that the pope, in his benevolence, had allowed the Jews time to ponder the subject, and finally convened the present assembly so that they might voice their doubts. But the Jews would not be permitted to employ sophistries in the manner of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. They were to ask their questions as a pupil asks his teacher, for the Divine Law is based upon authority and not upon logical demonstration. Moreover, he added, there were some Jews present who had resentfully inquired why the pope did not attempt to convert the Saracens and the Turks to Christianity. The answer was that the Jewish faith was closer to the Christian faith. The Jews were the lost ewes whom the pope would lead back to the flock. In these opening remarks the apostate revealed the tenor of the discussions that were to follow. The most antiquated and ossified methods of late scholasticism were employed for converting the Jews, but the Jews were forbidden the use of this same weapon. The sponsors of the debate intended to convince the Jews from their own books, but by means of a method of arguing with which they were not familiar; if they refused to be convinced, it would be due only to their obduracy and stiffneckedness.

The actual debate began on the following day. At first it was conducted orally. Such was the procedure at the sessions of February 8, 9, 10, 11 (a Sabbath), 13, 17 and 20. Concerning these early sessions, there have been preserved, in addition to the official Latin minutes taken by the apostolical notary, two Hebrew letters written by Jewish disputants. One of these letters was written by Bonastruc Desmaestre, one of the scholars who came from Gerona; the authorship of the

second letter is unknown. Both were intended as reports to the communities of the writers on the developments at Tortosa. On the whole, these reports confirm one another, but they differ characteristically in detail. The Jews wrote their reports from memory, upon leaving the auditorium, and were occasionally guilty of errors. Bonastruc's letter has been preserved only in the late literary version of the author of the *Shebet Yehudah*, who in his customary fashion added embellishments of his own. The authors of the Hebrew letters wrote to reassure their communities; they did not refer to matters which they considered ought to be kept confidential, but did express dissatisfaction with certain statements made by their associates in the course of the disputation. The apostolical notary, on the other hand, took notes during the disputation which he later edited. His record, however, was not always accurate, either because he did not grasp what was said or because he preferred to have it so. His defective reporting may explain in some measure things that seem to us circumlocutory and in poor taste in the Jewish arguments.⁵ But it is certain that the conduct of the Jews was not well planned beforehand. Ill-considered remarks that at times escaped their lips in public became the subjects of tense and bitter criticism when they returned to their own quarters.

The daily forums were opened by the Jewish spokesmen in turn. On the first day it was R. Zerahia Halevi (Rabbi Ferrer) who began, on the second R. Mattityahu, and on the third R. Astruc Halevi; their associates, however, took part in the disputation as well. To prove that the Messiah had already appeared, Hieronymus quoted daily one or more sections from the Talmud and the Midrash, such as the passage "It was taught in the school of Elijah that the span of the world is six-thousand years, of which the last two-thousand are the age of the Messiah" (Sanhedrin, 97); or, "the world is no younger than eighty-five jubilees [fifty-year

periods], etc.” (*ibid.*); or, “It happened that a certain Jew, etc.” (Palestinian Talmud, Berakhoth ch. II, fol. 5a, Midrash Echah 1,16.) Hieronymus drew his material from the partly inauthentic collection of Raymond Martini. This did not escape the Jews’ notice. In replying to Hieronymus, the Jews interpreted the talmudic passages in their obvious sense, excelling their opponent in this respect; only rarely did they avail themselves of the allegorical mode of interpretation, in the spirit of the age. But the apostate, who was backed by the pope and his entire consistory, always had the last word. The Jews attempted, but in vain, to have the debate conducted in a freer fashion and with greater adherence to essentials.

Already at the beginning of his answer, on February 8, R. Zerahia Halevi demanded that the *conditiones* of the Messiah be discussed first, that is, the nature of his mission, what he was expected to do, “and later we shall discuss whether he has come already or not.” But the pope rejected this proposal. When, at the next session (Feb. 9), R. Mattityahu quoted the talmudic saying, “Accursed be they who reckon the end of days,” the pope violently abused the Talmud, as if it had thereby cursed the prophet Daniel, who had “reckoned the end of days,” and referred to his intention of passing laws against the Jewish books after the close of the disputation. In this session, during the discussion on the “85 Jubilees,” R. Joseph Albo also took part. According to the Latin protocol, R. Joseph Albo “jumped up,” “almost angrily,” saying: “Assume that it will be proven to me that the Messiah has already appeared, I would not therefore think myself a bad Jew.”⁶ Obviously, Albo said this in accordance with his general system, which he set forth at length in his *Books of Principles*, and this matter played a large part in the second half of the Tortosa disputation. But according to the Latin protocol, R. Joseph Albo got entangled in self-contradictions at the session of the 9th February, and the Jewish

multitude present laughed at him and considered him defeated.

On the 10th of February, the Aggada of the Palestinian Talmud, Berakhoth ch. II (Midrash Echah, *loc. cit.*) was discussed. R. Astruc Halevi, who headed the Jewish delegation at that session, relied on R. Moses b. Nachman's attitude in the Barcelona disputation and said that he was not obliged to believe in the Aggada; but the sense of the said legend may be that the Messiah was born on the day of the destruction of the Temple, and that he remains alive and waits in the earthly Paradise and also appears sometimes at the gates of Rome.

When the pope asked him whether it was possible for the Messiah to live such a long time, R. Astruc rejoined sharply that the Christians attributed to their Messiah many characteristics far less acceptable to the intellect; they should not, therefore, marvel that the Jews believed in a Messiah who was able to live a thousand or two thousand years. When R. Astruc Halevi went on to aver that the Jews needed a Messiah, not for the salvation of their souls, but for their political restoration, "because their souls would be saved even if the Messiah never came,"⁷ the pope rebuked him, as if in so saying he had repudiated faith in the Messiah in general. R. Astruc had to apologize: he had, he said, assumed the impossible to be possible. Later he corrected himself. He had meant to say: even if the Messiah were to come just before the end of days. The author of the *Shebet Yehudah* relates that at this session (February 10) Hieronymus became so muddled in his arguments that the Jews felt that they might now "withdraw honorably"; "and we bribed princes to speak to the pope, and bishops to speak to Joshua Halorki, that the debate might be stopped; but we could not prevail; for the pope said: "Against his will, Hieronymus will have to debate." It is doubtful that there is any truth in this story.

The discussion was continued on the following day, Satur-

day, February 11, with the participation of various Jews. On this day, probably, R. Astruc Halevi uttered those sharp words (cited in the two Hebrew reports): “As the Christians tell of their Messiah many strange things which are difficult to apprehend, they should not wonder that the Jews believe that the Messiah may live a thousand years and more, till the time comes for him to reveal himself.”

In the Latin protocol of the same day and in the Hebrew notes that have survived, there are no indications that any real turning point occurred at the end of the first week of the disputation. But—as Hieronymus stated in a speech on the 22nd of December, 1413—something exceptional of quite another sort happened on the 11th of February. Several Jews attending the disputations were made to swear, on Scrolls of the Law, that the Jewish scholars had admitted without reservations that the Messiah had already appeared. This statement was formally recorded by the apostolic notary in the same manner as evidence taken in legal proceedings.⁸ Thus was false testimony extorted from weak and irresponsible persons; as a matter of fact, the Jewish scholars had done nothing but explain the obvious intent of the Midrash in question.

Next Monday, February 13th, Hieronymus opened the session and said that the Jews had indeed admitted in public that the Messiah had been born and revealed himself; but that he wanted to bring out another passage, so that the truth would be established. So he referred—for the first time in this disputation—to one of the forged midrashim from Raymond Martini’s treasure, as follows:

Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the Sanhedrin in the Hall of Hewn Stones was deprived of its right to try criminal cases. And R. Rahamon said that the seventy judges known as the Sanhedrin and the Jewish notables with them had torn out their beards and donned sackcloth, saying: “Woe unto us! For the scep-

tre hath departed from Judah and the Son of David hath not come.”

Thereupon R. Astruc Halevi declared that the passage was an imposture and produced a manuscript containing the correct text. But Hieronymus snatched the sheet from his hand and pretended to read the sham version from it.⁹ When, at the following session (on February 15), Hieronymus took up the matter again, Bonastruc Desmaestre asked that the discussion be postponed until Hieronymus could produce the body of the text. To this the pope agreed. But Halorki insisted that it was incumbent upon the Jews, and not upon him, to search out and produce the fraudulent passage. The same passage was discussed for a third time later in the proceedings, but Halorki did not, even then, produce the manuscript from which he had quoted it. The reason was simple. The passage occurs nowhere among the sayings of the talmudic sages, and is to be found only in Martini's *Pugio Fidei*.

Our only record of the sessions held on the following days—February 13, 15, 17 and 20, and on to the end of the debate—is contained in the Latin minutes. The debate was conducted so as to leave no room for progression or development. R. Moses aben Abez was received in a private audience by the pope, but the topic of their conversation is not known. On February 17, Hieronymus again disclosed the whole purpose of the disputation. It was not the pope's intention to argue with the Jews, but to instruct them in the Catholic faith. They might, if they wished, submit their doubts in a courteous manner; but no one would be allowed underhandedly to insinuate his personal views into the discussions.

On February 20, the head of the Dominican Order arose and summed up the discussions on behalf of the pope. It was amazing, he asserted, that the Jews refused to admit what any uneducated man could see with his own eyes, namely, that Magister Hieronymus had had the better of the argument. It followed, therefore that the Jews either had still

other points to make but did not wish to present them, or that they knew nothing at all. They must now choose one of the two alternatives. R. Moses aben Abez rejoined, on behalf of the Jews, that they had already given an adequate reply to Hieronymus, and that there was no need to add anything more. But the Dominican insisted: since the Jews had been so brazen as to differ from Hieronymus, they must either make additional replies or accept his argument.

The conduct of the Jews, he continued, was most inconsistent. At first they admitted that the Messiah had already been born, only to renege and say that nothing whatever has been proven to them. They obviously did not wish to be instructed, but strove, by their denials, to maintain their errors and personal opinions, which veered with every wind that blew. When the Dominican concluded his remarks, the Jews displayed “not a little resentment.” Some of them denied that the Messiah had come, or that his coming had been proven to them. In order to put an end to the *variation* of the Jews (their practice of changing their tack from time to time), the pope gave orders that the debate should be begun all over again: thereafter both sides were to present their arguments in writing. The task of editing the “acts” was entrusted to the apostolic notary.

In compliance with the new rules, both sides brought written memoranda to the sessions and read them out to the audience. The Jewish memoranda were read on behalf of all the delegates, but it is not possible to ascertain who had the largest part in drawing up these documents. Each side was given an opportunity to read the memoranda of the other before the sessions were opened. But there were occasions when the Jews came to the sessions unprepared and had to ask for additional time in which to reply. And so the entire disputation began all over again.

Hieronymus frequently quoted one or more passages to prove that the Messiah had already come. The Jews then read

their rebuttals. Immediately after the memoranda of both sides had been read, or additional arguments had been submitted and replied to, Hieronymus would be called upon to sum up the discussion. And so the debate proceeded, step by step, at the sessions of February 27, March 1, 6, 14, 22 and 31, and April 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17. Hieronymus repeated what he had said during the first stage of the disputation and also quoted some new passages, including Raymond Martinis forgeries.¹⁰ The Jews claimed that they ought not to be expected to interpret passages that did not occur in their literature, but the apostate rejoined—untruthfully—that he had already read the passage in question to them from a manuscript, or that the manuscripts were in Saragossa or some other place; and that even if he did not produce the books, they would not be excused from replying. Whenever the Jews rejected a passage as inauthentic, Hieronymus would promise to take the matter up again when the books were brought; but the books never were brought.

The written exchange of arguments enabled the Jews to take a more united and methodical stand, but now their opponent could also formulate his arguments more effectively, and they could not interrupt him while he spoke. When the Jews claimed the right of free discussion, they were told that the purpose of the assembly was not disputation, but instruction. When the Jews retorted that a teacher is bound to consider the wishes of his pupils, “for the heart knoweth its own bitterness” (Prov. 4.10), they were told to hold their tongues, and informed that the pope intended, not to enlighten the rabbinical disputants, who stubbornly and guilefully persisted in their prejudices at all costs, but to address himself to the simple and sincere masses with the object of liberating them from the domination of the rabbis and the yoke of the Torah. Whenever the Jews referred to the conflicting opinions on the degree to which the Aggada or certain beliefs were to be considered authoritative, the apostate

accused them of disloyalty either to their own religion or to tenets common to all the monotheistic religions, and threatened to invoke the anti-heresy laws against them. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the Catholic Church arrogated to itself the right of supervising the Jews in religious matters. During the disputation as well, the Jews were at times called upon to submit their statements for criticism to the pope as the supreme arbiter in all religious matters. The longer the debate continued, the harsher and more offensive was the tone taken by the Christians in addressing the obstinate and “shameless” Jews.

The Jewish rebuttals were distinguished for their lofty ethical and scholarly level, their circumspection and perspicacity. The Jewish scholars always prefaced their statements by saying that they had come in obedience to the pope’s command, but not to impugn the Christian faith. Any shortcomings in their remarks would be due to weakness of intellect or inadequacy of knowledge on their part, but not to any imperfections in the tenets of their faith, to which they clove without digressing by so much as a hair’s breadth. And if, God forbid, they should say anything against the Law of Moses or the commentaries of the talmudic sages, such remarks would be utterly invalid, as if they had never been uttered. The Jews’ firm faith in the hoped-for political redeemer was rooted in the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets, which were clear and explicit; and any talmudic saying that was not consistent with that faith should be interpreted figuratively, as a parable. The talmudic aggadoth were sermons, or fables, like those of the Christian preachers. For example, there was the aggada about R. Joshua b. Levi (Sanhedrin 98a), which had been cited by the apostate. In this aggada, R. Joshua was raised to Paradise while he was still alive, transported from Rome to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Rome, and conversed with R. Simeon b. Yohai, who had died long before him; such an aggada was obviously

a figment of the imagination. The Jews at Tortosa went even further in their criticisms of the midrashim. They said, for instance (concerning an aggada in the Palestinian Talmud) that it would be idle to discuss “the lowing of cattle and the words of diviners.”¹¹ The scholars at Tortosa followed in the footsteps of R. Moses b. Nachman, and from beginning to end of the disputation took a united and consistent stand in regard to the Aggada.

Less clear was their attitude concerning the connection between the messianic doctrine and the cardinal principles of faith. At first they touched upon the matter only casually, and it was not until an advanced stage of the discussions that they fully revealed their differences of opinion in this connection. Joshua Halorki, however, had claimed early in the disputation that faith in the Messiah was one of the thirteen principles of Judaism, and that it was unthinkable that the Talmud would allude to it in obscure and uncertain terms, since this was no less important a question than that of “an egg laid on a festival.” The Jews replied that faith in the Messiah was one of the thirteen principles but that the time of the Messiah’s advent was not a religious principle. R. Joseph Albo and R. Astruc Halevi took a more extreme stand and in the early stages of the debate intimated—later they spoke out forthrightly—that faith in the Messiah itself was not a religious principle. This view was not expressed in the joint memoranda because it was not held by all the scholars. And so Halorki was given an opening for asserting that the messianic doctrine was included among the thirteen principles, and that it was impossible to set up as a religious tenet faith in a Messiah who had not yet come. For the time being the Jews did not reject these hairsplitting methods of demonstration, but confined themselves to saying that the tenet of faith in the Messiah could be derived only from the Law and the Prophets and not from the Aggada. Halorki then made the rejoinder that all the tenets of the Jewish faith,

such as *creatio ex nihilo*, the messianic age, and resurrection of the dead, were derived from the talmudic Aggada. The Jews at this point still refrained from elucidating in detail the dogmatic hierarchy of the Bible and the Aggada. Above all, however, they honorably and courageously resisted all attempts to undermine their faith in the election of Israel as the chosen people and when they were allowed an opportunity to discuss the essence of faith in the Messiah comprehensively, they showed themselves competent not only to interpret the midrashim, but to discern and distinguish the fundamental differences between the Jewish belief and Christian theology.

On May 2, 1413, Magister Hieronymus delivered a formal address to the Jews, in which he again called upon them to repent, taking as his text Jeremiah 3.22 (“Repent, ye backsliding children. . .”). The pope had been so concerned for the souls of the Jews, said Hieronymus, that he had commanded the disputation to be begun with the problem of the Messiah, who had already come. The Jews, he continued, had been guilty of disobedience to this command, and desirous of avoiding the difficulty and insistent on getting their own way, had given evasive replies. Then, though they were the greatest rabbis and scholars in all Spain, they had pleaded inadequate knowledge. After he, Halorki, had proved the essential point, namely, that the Messiah had already come, the pope had complied with the Jews’ request that the nature of the Messiah (that is, his acts and the consequences of his advent) be discussed first. The Jews had said that first of all the Messiah would bring the Jewish people back to their own land and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple, and had tried to prove their point by quoting the well-known passages from the Torah and the Prophets. Hieronymus had thereupon quoted passages from the Midrash and Maimonides’ *Mishneh Torah* to prove that the Scriptures should be interpreted “spiritually.” Hieronymus submitted twelve questions concerning the birthplace of the Messiah, his miraculous birth,

his divinity, the sin of Adam and its remission, the spiritual and universal nature of salvation, the death of the Messiah as atonement for the sin of Adam, the substitution of the eucharist for animal sacrifices, abrogation of the ritual commandments, and the causes of the Exile. The problems of the Trinity and the Incarnation were never once introduced into this great debate, probably because the Christians' method of interpreting and distorting the midrashim was not adequate for dealing with such complex matters.

The Jewish scholars replied to Hieronymus's twelve points in a detailed memorandum, which they read at the session of May 17. The gist of the memorandum was as follows: The problem of the Messiah's advent is not relevant to the fundamental differences between the Jewish and Christian faiths. The Jews had not been dilatory and evasive in their replies, but had tried in all seriousness to defend their own doctrine. They had not rejected in advance the passages quoted by their opponent; he, however, had cited passages found not in the books of the Jews but in corrupt and falsified manuscripts.¹² If the Jews had seemed to acquiesce in their opponents' arguments, such acquiescence had been merely conditional: *posito et non concessio*. In pleading inadequate knowledge, they had not thereby intended to evade the issue and seek a way out—which would doubtless have been a very bad way out—but they had thought their replies sufficient, and silence was better than speech, especially since in any case Hieronymus would have the last word. The Jews had not practiced deceit, but defended the Law of Moses, which their ancestors had received from the Almighty by the hand of the greatest of the prophets, with “signs and wonders,” in the presence of the whole people. The Torah Law was established to eternity, and the Jews were not free to let it go undefended out of fear or shame, as it is written (Ps. 119.46): “I will also speak of Thy testimonies before kings and will not be ashamed.”

In their memorandum of rebuttal, the Jews flatly rejected

the “spiritual” interpretation of the messianic prophecies, and replied to Hieronymus’s twelve questions. The Jews were not aware of any specific locality designated as the birthplace of the Messiah; nor did they know anything about a miraculous birth. The Messiah will be a righteous man and a prophet, but there will be nothing divine about him. He will come to redeem the Jewish people from physical captivity, so that they may freely and completely keep the Law of Moses, which assures them of their portion in the world-to-come. The sin of Adam is still unexpiated, since all the penalties enumerated in the third chapter of Genesis still plague mankind. The Jews do not believe in a messianic death that will atone for the sin of Adam. The Messiah will come primarily to redeem from captivity the enslaved Jewish people, including the proselytes. The Messiah will not proclaim a new Law, for the Law of Moses is perfect and eternal, and he will instruct the Jews in it and lead them in its ways, as the prophets did, and even more so. In the days of the Messiah the Jews will again offer sacrifices, and they will continue to keep the commandments. The sins of the people are the cause of the long exile. The Jews will again possess their land, within its former boundaries and beyond.

At the sessions of May 19 and 22, Hieronymus analyzed the basic arguments of the Jews, and in his speeches of May 26 and 30, June 6, 14, 21, 26 and 30, and July 3 and 12, he quoted the midrashim he needed as the basis for his twelve points. The Jews answered him point by point. The apostate replied in turn, and the Jews either answered him again or did not avail themselves of the opportunity. Hieronymus delivered the closing address. These proceedings occupied the whole month of August. Hieronymus drew more and more upon the forged midrashim of Raymond Martini, which the Jews refuted with their customary skill and scholarship. The apostate could not have given even one single source for his quotations; but he arrogantly sought to disguise the fact.

On August 2, 1413, the Jews opened the discussion with a new statement of principle. It had not yet been proven to them that, according to the Talmud, the Messiah had already come, and they had nothing to add to the replies they had already given in this connection. In essence, the aggadoth were like sermons and no binding conclusions could be drawn from them. The Scriptural text was to be so interpreted that the figurative sense would not clash with the plain meaning. It was incumbent upon a Jew to obey the injunctions of the talmudic sages in regard to the biblical commandments and to give up his life for them if need be; but when those sages spoke in parables, he was not bound to take their words literally. The messianic prophecies had not been fulfilled during the period of the Second Temple. The exile had not been abolished. The Land of Israel was not freely held by the Jews; they were, in fact, subject to the kings of Greece and the emperors of Rome. The advent of Jesus of Nazareth had brought about the destruction of the temple. The kingdom and the faith of the Nazarene had not spread throughout the world. The Evil Desire, that is to say, Satan, still held the world under his sway; the nations made war upon one another, and men sinned against their God. It was not true, as the Christian side contended, that universal peace was impossible. Just as every king is able to maintain peace in his own kingdom, so the Messiah-King will cause peace to prevail in the whole world. The Jews do not deny that proselytes are considered members of the Jewish people, but this applies only after they have embraced the Jewish faith wholeheartedly.

Where the Scriptures allude to the ingathering of the dispersed ones of Israel, the reference is to none other than the People Israel, “namely, to us Jews,” declared the disputants at Tortosa with national pride. The Tabernacle in the desert was actually built, and was not only parable, as Halorki claimed; even so will the Temple be built in days to

come. The Jews do not negate the heavenly Jerusalem; but the heavenly Jerusalem can only be attained through the earthly Jerusalem.

The Jews therefore await a Messianic king who will build the earthly Jerusalem, so that thereby they may attain to the divine glory that is called the heavenly Jerusalem; though at the present time, while the Jews are in Exile, they merit a greater reward because they serve God in distress and affliction; and a little worship by a man in captivity and exile is more significant and deserving of a greater reward than much worship in a state of happiness and prosperity. Nevertheless, we hope to be redeemed from this exile so that we may serve God in the fullness of joy, not as at present, when we are unable to worship Him, though we desire to do so.¹³

In discussing the details of the messianic doctrine, the Jews pointed out in their memoranda that the Jew does not deny that the Messiah's appearance will be accompanied by miracles. But he knows nothing about his birth being of a miraculous nature, nor is anything to that effect to be found in the authentic midrashim. Similarly, there is no allusion in the Midrash to his divine nature. Many Jewish commentators hold that the passage containing the verse "Behold, My servant shall prosper" (Isa. 52.13–53) refers to the Jewish people; but even those commentators who regard the verse as referring to the Messiah do not ascribe any divine attributes to him. The Messiah will be exalted above Abraham and Moses and will be higher than the ministering angels, according to the Midrash, because he will voluntarily undergo torments and ordeals and will influence men for good more than did Abraham and Moses.

Halorki questioned the Jewish belief in physical salvation, and said that the divine reward should far exceed men's deserts. To this the Jews replied that in the light of all the

mercies of God, Who had given the reward beforehand by creating man and breathing a rational spirit into him, all the worship due from man to God is obligatory and deserving of no particular reward. All that God bestows upon man is nought but a free gift, such as His promise to Abraham and his seed of the Land which was to enjoy divine abundance.

In answer to Halorki's jesting query as to the reward of those who died while following the Messiah, the Jews declared that just and good men merit Paradise; and that this does not depend upon messianic hopes, but on keeping the commandments of the Torah. When Halorki averred that the good things of this world were created only that men might be tempted to sin, the Jews rejoined that the good things of this world are no cause for sin except to those so inclined; but that in the messianic age the hearts of all people will be prepared to serve the Creator. Hieronymus tried to prove by the Midrash that the Messiah would save souls from the torments of Hell, and would accept a death sentence for himself so as to expiate the sin of Adam. The Jews replied that Jewish scholars held various views about the messianic age. Some believed that the difference between the present age and the messianic era lay only in the termination of political servitude, while others were of the opinion that physical death and all the other penalties imposed upon Adam would be abolished, and that the splendor of Creation, which had been dimmed by the original sin, would be restored as of old. The authentic Midrash had nothing to say about a universal judgment upon all souls: only the soul that sins intentionally descends to Hell. The debaters did not hesitate to accept the well-known midrash in *Pesikta Rabbati* 36 (a midrash wrongly regarded as suspect by some modern scholars), which declares that—as is the case in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel—prophets and pious men willingly endure trials and tribulations so that all nations may be redeemed.

There are numerous references in the sayings of the sages that the pious suffer for the sins of all the nations.

And thus the Messiah will suffer pangs and travail in the beginning so that the People Israel may be worthy of redemption; for this he will endure many affronts from the nations, and afflictions and wars and other evils in which he will find himself involved for Israel's sake. And since the torments of the Messiah at that time will be numerous beyond all bearing, God revealed them to the soul of the Messiah, which stands under the throne of Glory, to know whether the Messiah would be willing to undergo them. The Messiah said that he was willing, so that in his time all who had died since the days of Adam might rise again in body and spirit; yea, even they who had been devoured by wolves and drowned in the sea.

It therefore follows that both bodies and souls will be resurrected; but there is no mention of souls being released from Hell. This midrash cannot possibly be interpreted as applying to Jesus of Nazareth because it contains a statement that not a single soul will be lost in the Messiah's generation, while the Christians hold that all who witnessed his torments and did not believe in him are condemned to Hell. Moreover, according to the midrash, the Messiah's main sufferings will take the form of sadness and weeping, and there is no hint whatsoever about death.¹⁴

When the question whether the Messiah would redeem all other peoples as well as Israel was discussed in detail, the Jewish scholars again stressed that the Messiah would not come primarily to save souls, because the Torah of Moses had already shown the true way of saving souls. All who accepted this way would be saved, both before and after the messianic age. When the Messiah came, the Jews, who were in physical captivity, would be redeemed, while all other

peoples would accept the Law of Moses and save their souls by listening to the warnings of the Messiah and beholding his signs. Halorki objected, saying that if this were so, the pope, the emperor and the Christian kings would be deprived of their freedom and subjected to foreign domination. The Jews replied that, in fact, all the nations would retain their freedom in the messianic age and would accept no servitude except obedience to the Messiah, namely, to Divine commandments, and this was not servitude, but freedom. The Jews added that the Talmud had nothing to say about a new Torah to be given by the Messiah; but that the Midrash taught that whereas in the present world the Jew forgets his Torah, owing either to the pangs of exile or to ignorance of the meaning of the commandments, this will not be so in the days of the Messiah, who will reveal the secrets of the Law. When the Christians argued that the Torah promises only worldly goods, the Jews replied that explicitly the Torah mentions only material prosperity, but that the Torah *per se* bestows spiritual values, and that certain passages in it even refer to spiritual rewards. Moreover, Moses had given an oral promise of spiritual glory to the men of his generation, and since then that promise had been transmitted orally from generation to generation until it reached the sages of the Talmud, who spoke of it openly.

In this context the messianic abrogation of sacrifices was brought up for discussion. Magister Hieronymus cited the views of “modern” Jewish authors on the significance of the sacrifices, in an attempt to prove that all the reasons advanced by those authors would lose their validity in the messianic age. He claimed that some of these authors, among them R. Abraham ibn Ezra, held that the sacrifices were intended to nullify the influence of the stars, albeit, this view was regarded by most Jews as heretical. Other authors stated that the sacrifices were intended as atonement for the souls of sinners, and that this was the reason for the atonement

by the slaughter of fowl on the eve of the Day of Atonement; sacrifices were also offered to mislead Satan. All these views Hieronymus dubbed views of the “talmudists.” He then cited the opinion expressed by Maimonides in his *Guide of the Perplexed* (III, 32): that in themselves the sacrifices were of no value, but that God commanded them for educational reasons and out of consideration for ancient customs. All this, Halorki tried to prove from the Bible and the Talmud, would lose its validity in the messianic age. To this argument the Jewish scholars replied that, without granting the accuracy of their opponent’s citations, they would say that the prevailing and accepted opinion approximated the second view referred to by him; it must, however, be understood that the sacrifice of an animal was a symbolic act to encourage sinners to confess and repent. Some added that sacrifice was one of the mysteries of the Torah, and that its true significance was not known. At all events, it was through the instrumentality of sacrifice that God received the prayers of the prophets and saints, who thereby became fit to receive the spirit of prophecy. Even those who ascribed a rational significance to the sacrifices, like Maimonides, had to admit that there were deep mysteries in the matter which were known to God alone, and that the coming of the messianic age would constitute no pretext for the abolition of sacrifices.¹⁵

It was almost impossible, declared the Jewish scholars, to account for the length of the exile, because this was one of the profoundest of the divine mysteries, like the afflictions of the righteous. What had been said by the ancient sages on the subject had been intended to arouse the moral sense, and had been expressed in an imaginative and subjective manner. Some held that sinfulness in the times of the First Temple had been the cause of all the disasters that followed, and that the Jewish people had not yet accumulated sufficient merit to nullify the judgment against them because they did

not accept their sufferings willingly. Others said that the exile was due to the unjustified hatred that had been common in the age of the Second Temple and was still in evidence among the Jews. In any case, the exile had not been prolonged because the Jews had not accepted Jesus of Nazareth; even now, the Jewish scholars pointed out, Jews could go to Turkey and there embrace Islam or some other non-Christian faith and so liberate themselves from the yoke of servitude.¹⁶ In general, it was beyond the power of the human intellect to weigh and measure the relation between sin and its punishment. After replying to the last question—which had to do with the return of the Jewish people to its own land—the Jews again lodged a vigorous protest against the use of the inauthentic midrashim. They also reiterated that the Jews were not bound to accept the aggadoth as binding in matters of belief.

The replies of the Jewish scholars at this stage of the great disputation were among the very best ever given by defenders of Judaism to Christian arguments in the whole course of the Middle Ages. They interpreted the messianic doctrine of the Mishnah and the Talmud more explicitly and comprehensively than any of their predecessors or successors; and it is a great pity that they did not publish their statements in a Hebrew work for their own generation and for posterity. Generally speaking, they deviated in a considerable measure from the philosophy of Maimonides and adhered closely to the fundamental lines laid down by R. Moses b. Nachman in his polemical works and in his commentary on the Bible. On a number of points they copied his statements almost word for word. To Halorki's sophistical arguments they replied clearly and simply, point by point. In particular, their expert and bold criticism of the libellous aggadoth which their opponent had borrowed from Raymond Martini's collection of texts, is deserving of the highest praise. It may well be that such Christological midrashim were current, in

various versions, among certain Jews, and that those inclined to err may have been led astray by them. In any event, the scholars who defended Judaism at Tortosa were not responsible for the lapses or failures of others.

THE CONCLUDING DISCUSSION OF THE MESSIANIC DOCTRINE

The official minutes go only as far as August 30, 1413, when the Jews finished reading their rebuttal, and are resumed only on November 29. It is unlikely that the rabbis and communal leaders were permitted to return to their homes in the interim. We can infer only a little of what happened during the recess—both to the delegates of the communities at Tortosa and to their constituents in the various localities. At the time the delegates left for Tortosa, anti-Jewish riots had broken out in a number of places, and the government had tried to protect the Jews. Even while the Jewish leaders were in Tortosa defending their faith, Vincent Ferrer was roaming the countryside and harassing the Jews. The minutes show that the debate was resumed on November 29; but on November 20 the king had already written to Vincent Ferrer, instructing him to go to Tortosa and to preach there to the Jews, who were waiting for him to teach them, and from Tortosa to go to Saragossa, where, it was expected, numbers of Jews would be converted.¹⁷

At the sessions of November 29 and December 22 (1413) Magister Hieronymus went back to the original starting-point of the disputation and summarized the proofs which he claimed he had adduced for the appearance of the Messiah. He asserted that he had proved what he had set out to prove, and that now the Jews must either bring forward additional arguments, or admit themselves defeated. The sponsors of the disputation declared all the discussions held between May and August concerning the requirements to be met by a Messiah as irrelevant to the main argument.

On January 8, 1414, the pope in person opened the new se-

ries of sessions. The gist of his statement was as follows: Since several Jews had objected to his sitting as a judge in a matter in which he was an interested party, he would arrange matters so that any man—believer or non-believer—would be able, by exercising his own judgment and with no perversion of the truth, to draw the proper inference from the discussions. He had desired from the first, and still desired, to curtail the proceedings, but the Jews themselves had prevented him from doing so. Against his will a minor local debate had developed into an important affair for the whole Jewish population of Aragon. At first the discussions had been carried on orally, but the “veerings” (*variatio*) of the Jews had obliged him to have the views exchanged in writing. He was determined to complete the task he had begun. At present, he had three purposes in mind: salvation of the souls of the Jews; curtailment of the proceedings; and securing practical results from the disputation. After delivering his opening address, the pope appointed several committees to provide instruction for those desiring it, and to carry on the debate with those who wished to continue. In conclusion, the pope announced that after the termination of the disputation, he was minded to issue certain edicts against the Talmud and concerning the Jewish way of life.

Only three of the Jewish scholars expressed a desire to continue the debate: R. Ferrer (R. Zerahia Halevi), R. Matityahu Hayitzhari, and R. Astruc Halevi. R. Joseph Albo, who was beyond all question one of the most eminent champions of Judaism, contented himself with saying that all the other Jews should not be obliged to remain at Tortosa for the sake of the few who wished to carry on the disputation. It is likely that the Jews had agreed among themselves that only three of their distinguished leaders should carry on the disputation, so as to enable all the other delegates to return to their homes. They wished to prolong the discussions only in order to gain time, in the hope that meanwhile something

would happen, or that some miracle would occur to bring the Christian missionary zeal to a halt.

According to the minutes, R. Astruc Halevi left Tortosa without permission after he had submitted his memorandum, and the joint address of R. Zerahia Halevi and R. Mattityahu Hayitzhari was therefore read on January 26, 1414.¹⁸ The two scholars from Saragossa began with an ironical reference to Magister Hieronymus as one who “invites, encourages, and then compels the Jews to believe” that the messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. The pope had permitted, indeed, had actually commanded the Jews to voice their doubts freely, but “Magister Hieronymus has said time and again that it was only our contumacy and stubbornness that kept us from elucidating and disclosing our counter-arguments. We have consequently resolved to obey the pope’s command and to refrain from anything bordering on contumacy and stubbornness.” The talmudic passages thus far quoted indicated that the Messiah had not appeared in the time of Jesus of Nazareth. How, therefore, could those passages be invoked against the Jews? The Christian declares: “I am not bound to take into account the part of the passage which disproves my point because I have no faith in the talmudic sages. But the Jew, who does have faith in them and believes in the truth of their sayings, is bound to admit that from the passage in question it appears that the Messiah has already been born.” To this the Jew replies:

The Christian, who does not accept these sayings, has no right to avail himself of them for the purpose of his argument. This is logical, because he cares not whether they be true or false; nor is it incumbent upon him to interpret them by the method suited to them, namely, by the talmudic rules. The inference that the Christian wishes to draw from them is, indeed, correct from his point of view. But the Jew, who is expected to draw inferences from them that will lead him to change his reli-

gion, accepts that inference only as a hypothesis. Therefore, before he will be moved to act on these sayings, he will want to be convinced that they are true in every respect, and that they are not erroneous in part or as a whole. He would be boorish and unintelligent if he were to take so drastic a step on the strength of a single saying and, having done so, found himself obliged to declare publicly that it was untrue or erroneous. If the Christian were satisfied to have the Jew embrace Christianity on the strength of these sayings, he must in all fairness undertake to resolve the contradictions in them, and must be at pains to meet the Jew's objections to his interpretations. He, the Christian, must explain each and every word in them with the utmost precision, so that the translation will be correct and not misleading and sophistical.

After giving the passage "It was taught in the school of Elijah" (Sanh. 97a) and other passages as examples, the Jewish scholars continued:

Concerning these and similar questions the Christian and the Jew argue for a certain length of time; but, after they have argued sufficiently, the Jew says no more, out of reverence. But, when he is at home again and ponders the translation or interpretation suggested to him and finds himself unconvinced, he adheres to his own faith and is strengthened in it more than ever by the saying in question.

Hieronymus replied to this memorandum on the same day and at sessions held on January 30 and February 1, expatiating casuistically on the right of the Christian to make use of excerpts from the Talmud, even though he did not accept it as a whole.

The sessions of February 15–March 2 were devoted to discussing the memorandum of R. Astruc Halevi, who had returned to Tortosa in the meantime. The memorandum was

complete in eight chapters. When he read it at the sessions, R. Astruc changed the order of the first two chapters, saying that in his opinion they were not essential to the subject. He doubtless considered it necessary to begin with certain effective arguments lest he miss the opportunity of presenting them at all.

With this most stimulating memorandum, R. Astruc finally raised the level of the discussions to the high ground of principle to which the Jews had aspired from the first. He began¹⁹ by referring to the disputations between himself and Halorki in 1412 at Alcañiz, their common birthplace. Those debates had been based on a treatise by the apostate published that same year. Halorki had begun his treatise as he later began the great disputation, with the syllogism already quoted above: The man in whom the messianic prophecies are fulfilled is the Messiah; the prophecies are fulfilled in Jesus; therefore, Jesus is the Messiah.

R. Astruc employed the current methods of argument of his time to refute both Halorki's major and minor premises. By use of the same method he pointed out that the twenty-four "conditions" suggested by Halorki for the Messiah were untenable. In the second chapter of his memorandum, R. Astruc asserted that the question of the time of the Messiah's coming was insignificant in comparison with the fundamental divergences between the Jewish and Christian doctrines concerning the Messiah, especially with regard to such questions as to whether the Messiah was human or divine, whether he was born of a virgin, or whether his function was to save souls or bodies. Differences of opinion as to whether the Messiah had already come or was still to come would vanish automatically with his coming. This was not, however, the case in regard to the fundamental differences between the two faiths, which would continue to exist. The fundamental differences between the faiths were such as those concerning the Incarnation and the Trinity, negation of which by a

Christian constituted heresy. The question as to whether the Messiah had come or was still to come was not included in this category. If, for example, a Jew were to claim that the Messiah had appeared to the tribes neighboring on the territory of Prester John of India (de Indiis), but that the Jews of the West had not been so privileged because of their sins, that view would be neither good nor true, but there would be no taint of heresy in it.²⁰ Moreover, the Jew denies the Christian doctrine of a Messiah who has already come because he believes that the traits and deeds which the Christian attributes to him, whether he has already come or is still to come, should not be attributed to the Messiah. The Jew rejects the attributes with which the Christian endows the Messiah, saying that such a Messiah has not come and will never come. But the Christian does not contradict the Jew who says that the Messiah has not yet come, because the Messiah of whom the Jew speaks is a lofty personage, a man born of a human being, and his act of redemption will be to bring the bodies out of slavery into freedom, to raise the Jewish people to a state of enduring prosperity, to build the Temple and to maintain it in splendor. All admit that such a Messiah has not yet arrived. Can there possibly be any difference of opinion between Jew and Christian in this respect? The Christian definition of the Messiah is that of a God-man, while the Jewish definition is that of a superior human being. The function of the Christian Messiah is to save souls from Hell, while the Jewish Messiah is to take the Jewish bodies out of servitude. If the Christian says that the personage who is a God-man releases souls from Hell, and the Jew says that a superior human being, begotten by a mortal, has not yet brought the Jews out of captivity—is there any contradiction between the one opinion and the other? Assuredly not!

On February 15, 1414, R. Astruc Halevi began by reading the third chapter of his memorandum.²¹ The truth of a reli-

gion, he explained, does not depend upon the knowledge that its believers have of it. If a Christian living among Moslems or pagans were defeated in a religious argument, that would not prove his religion valueless, but would only indicate that that particular Christian did not know it well. It is forbidden to argue matters of religion, as it is written: "The mouth of the wise uttereth wisdom, and his tongue speaketh justice. The law of his God is in his heart. None of his steps slide" (Ps. 37. 30–31). If we declare that we have nothing more to say in this discussion and so withdraw from it, we are doing what is incumbent upon every man who is true to his faith to do. It does not follow therefrom that the Jewish religion is not true. The Jews had not said that in general they had nothing more to say, but rather that they believed that the replies already given sufficed to resolve the doubts expressed by Magister Hieronymus. In this particular case there were specific reasons for the ignorance of the Jewish delegates.²² They had been far away from their homes for ten months. (The memorandum was written late in December 1413 and early in January 1414). Their possessions had decreased and been almost entirely destroyed. Their absence from their communities had caused the latter immeasurable harm. They had lost their wives and children on account of the debate. The needs of many of the delegates at Tortosa and of their families at home had not been adequately provided for; and here, in Tortosa, they were put to great expense. Could men faced with such difficulties be regarded as defeated, while their opponents were happy and prosperous?

On February 17, R. Astruc began to read the fourth chapter of his memorandum,²³ in which he asserted that in his summings-up of November 29 and December 22, Magister Hieronymus had ignored the basic arguments of the Jews. His proofs were based on aggadoth whose authority the Jews were not bound to recognize as binding. The Jews were absolutely

convinced that the Messiah had not come as yet, because there was no man in the whole world in whom the messianic prophecies had been fulfilled. If the sayings in question are compatible with the prophecies, the Jews accept them; and if not, they should be interpreted figuratively, so as not to be incompatible with the Jewish faith. If the Jewish scholars did not know how to interpret them, this was due to the paucity of their knowledge and not to any shortcomings in their religion. All the sayings quoted by Halorki were uttered by men who firmly believed that the Messiah had not yet come, and gave their lives for that belief; hence they should not be brought in as witnesses to testify against their own faith. The Jews had made such declarations several times in order to stop the debate; but inferences against their religion should not be drawn from those declarations.

After these general remarks, R. Astruc proceeded, in the latter sections of his memorandum,²⁴ to deal with Halorki's other arguments, employing—in a greater measure than his associates had done—the allegorical method of interpreting the aggadoth. In conclusion, he reiterated his amazement that the Jews were charged with obduracy because they would not betray the faith of their fathers. "They should be judged favorably," he declared, "because they are courageous and loyal to their convictions, because they are not concerned for worldly possessions and have no fear of toil and affliction." And then he summed up:

Such is the rejoinder that I, Astruc Halevi, make for the time being—knowing well my shortcomings and the toil and afflictions that threaten me so as to deprive me of all knowledge and understanding, as a man whom the conditions already mentioned plague and irk and whom loyalty to his faith commits and binds. I consider that, with this reply, I am no longer bound to discuss the matter of this debate by virtue of the general reasons contained herein. But this does not shake or undermine

our belief that the Messiah has not yet come; and we Jews hold this belief well-grounded and true.

Courageous and wise scholar that he was, R. Astruc Halevi made an analysis of the dogmatic differences between the Jewish and Christian messianic doctrines surpassing anything that had been previously said. With the logical methods of those times, he most skillfully demonstrated that faith is not dependent upon dialectical proofs. With a courage unexampled in the Middle Ages, he revealed the shameful circumstances under which the Jews had been compelled to enter into the disputation or to be harangued in the most delicate areas of faith and emotion.

The reply made by Hieronymus was cynical and casuistical in the extreme. On February 15, the apostate answered the third chapter of R. Astruc's memorandum, which had been read in public on that same day. The truth of religious tenets, he argued, depends neither upon faith nor upon knowledge. Astruc's remarks on this point were contrary to logic and common sense. The Jews claimed that their ignorance did not invalidate their faith; indeed, it is true that a faith which is true today and false tomorrow is not subject to refutation. But it was possible to refute the arguments of the Jewish disputants, who shamelessly defended a false faith. Otherwise, it would not be possible to refute the arguments of a heretic. Not only is it not forbidden to argue matters of religion, but it is incumbent upon qualified persons to do so. The Jewish spiritual leaders were in duty bound to give an accounting for the doctrine they taught to others. Psalm 37. 30-31 should be interpreted in quite another manner. Were the Jew's faith truly the law of God, He would not have let them stand so bewildered and frightened in the presence of the pope, as it is written: "I will also speak of Thy testimony before kings, and will not be ashamed" (Ps. 119.46). The Jews had shown by their own actions that it was permissible to argue matters of faith, because they had been willing to dispute up to

this point, and R. Astruc Halevi had been one of those who agreed to continue the disputation. King Solomon had said: “The righteous shall never be moved (Prov. 10.30),” and “The Philosopher” had said the same thing in his *Ethics*. “And you, R. Astruc,” he continued, “who consider yourself a Magister, should set an example of courage to others. Neither concern for your wife nor any other anxiety should be allowed to mar your serenity; and even if some change has occurred in you out of sensual causes, it should have continued for only a short time, for the mind should exercise control over the senses,” etc., etc. If Astruc’s troubles had affected his mind, there was no point in disputing with him; and, if not, why had he less knowledge now than at the beginning? Had he not declared, in the presence of the pope, that it was he who had composed most of the Jewish replies during the disputation?

In replying to the fourth chapter of R. Astruc’s memorandum, Hieronymus reiterated his view that the aggadoth were binding upon the Jews. Following in the footsteps of Nicholas Donin and of Raymond Martini, he insisted that the Talmud owed its origin to hatred of Christianity. When the rabbis realized that the murder of Jesus had not prevented the diffusion of Christianity, they reduced their laws to writing, and invented the story that the Mishnah was a second Torah which God had given verbally to Moses. After Rome had embraced the Christian religion and Jerome, a Church Father, translated the Bible into Latin, the Jews composed the Talmud as a means of bolstering their religion. In this book they interpreted the commandments in detail and claimed that all this had been revealed to them from on high, adding blasphemies against the Christian religion, the Law of Moses and natural morality. This was why they had claimed that the sayings of the sages were more binding than the Torah itself; and this applies to the Aggada as well as to the Halakhah. The speaker buttressed his arguments with

quotations from the Talmud, the Midrash, the works of Maimonides, liturgical hymns, and references to Jewish customs based upon the Aggada (such as the Chair of the Prophet Elijah). The Jews, who now dared to deny, in the presence of such an august assembly, that the Aggada was binding upon them, were thereby negating the tenets of their own faith. The pope ought to punish them for this and to condemn them as heretics. The consensus of the later talmudic opinion concerning the messianic doctrine did not impair the binding character of the primary sayings, because most of them had been written before the time of Jesus, and the later compilers of the Talmud had supplemented them with their own ideas. The deeds and devotion of the talmudic sages should not be brought into the argument, just as the acts of the apostles and later teachers had not been brought in, even though they had taken upon themselves far greater sufferings than the rabbis. These talmudic scholars had been a small group of ignorant men, who suffered, fled and hid themselves for lack of any other alternative, unlike the early Christians, who proclaimed their faith from the rooftops. In conclusion, Halorki turned to R. Astruc, saying: Faith is not transmitted by inheritance. Our Father Abraham forsook the faith of his parents. If Astruc were to embrace Christianity, he would derive no advantage from so doing, but would only forfeit his prestige and his rabbinical office. Hence it was not right of him to say that it was desired to convert him and to entice him with offers of worldly goods.

At the conclusion of the apostate's address, R. Astruc Halevi arose, on the same day (March 2), and declared that he had nothing to add to his previous statements, and that anything he might have said previously that was inconsistent with natural morality, the Scriptures and the Jewish religion was to be regarded as unspoken. This declaration was made for wise tactical reasons. Hieronymus branded R. Astruc's remarks as sophistry; though the Jews would not admit their

defeat—and no one obliged them to do so—the fact was definite and certain.

On March 16, Rabbi Ferrer (R. Zerahia Halevi) delivered the last speech for the Jewish side.²⁵ His purpose was primarily to make clear, in concise statements, the attitude of the Jews concerning the validity of the aggadoth from the point of view of dogma. Jew and Christian were agreed that their principles of faith (*articuli legis*) came to them solely by way of faith and tradition. Such principles (*premissae traducte et acquise per fidem*) required no proofs. The Scriptures were based on the articles of faith and should be interpreted accordingly. If some obscure saying in the Talmud was apparently inconsistent with one of the Jewish dogmas, it should be interpreted in a manner compatible with that principle. The Christians did the same thing in a like case. Just as the Christian believed that the Messiah had already come and this belief was one of the articles of his faith, so the Jew saw in expectation of the Messiah—as long as his people were still kingless and in Exile and many other essential conditions remained unfulfilled—one of the articles of his faith, etc. In this tactic, R. Zerahia was availing himself of the methods used by Thomas Aquinas, his aim being to eliminate the question of faith in the Messiah from the disputation altogether.

Hieronymus began his reply at the end of the day (March 16, 1414) and continued on March 19. He spoke eloquently, making long and strong attacks against the ever-changing excuses of the Jews. Considering the last speech of R. Ferrer, he explained that “waiting for the Messiah to come” was an act of willing, but not of believing. Following Thomas of Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*, he tried to set forth the relation between *fides* (faith), Scripture and *articulus* (articles of faith). One should not subordinate Scripture to the articles of faith, but rather interpret the articles from Scripture; the same thing held true for the talmudic sayings and their re-

lation to the principles of faith. The dogma of faith in the coming of the Messiah was not the basis of the Written and the Oral Law, but an inference from it. Maimonides had derived his dogmas from the Scriptures and the Talmud by abstraction. He was the first to include expectation of the Messiah among the dogmas. Later scholars took a different view, as for example, R. Hasdai, the late rabbi of the Jews and their great authority, who had asserted in several passages in his book that faith in the Messiah was not a dogma, but simply one of those things a Jew was bound to believe in and adhere to.²⁶ Moreover, R. Astruc Halevi in his memorandum had expressed an opinion different from that of R. Zerahia Halevi. Was it seemly that there should be such differences of opinion on a religious principle? Such was the gist of Hieronymus' rebuttal. The Jews said nothing more, and Magister Hieronymus was able to sum up his conclusions in his own way in his speech of April 19, 1414.

Such was the end of the debate. It is safe to say that, the general situation being what it was, it could hardly have ended in any other way. After all that has been said above, it is unnecessary to expatiate on the methods of the apostate and his sponsors. Apart from a certain few literary instances (*viz*, Peter Abelard and Ramon Lull), religious disputations in the Middle Ages were neither theoretical debates between scholars nor honest and sincere clashes of ideas. The aggressor sneered at his opponent, and did not hesitate to use literary forgeries and sophistical arguments to coerce and overwhelm the other side. The aim of debate was to reduce the opponent to silence and gain the upper hand—the kind of argument employed did not matter in the least. Judged even by medieval criteria, it is apparent that at Tortosa the Christians used formal logic in a manner inconsistent with the highest conscientious standards of the age. Halorki did not scruple to set before his opponents a number of forged midrashim, and never complied with their demands to be

shown the source of his quotations, putting them off brazenly time after time. In all the long and wearisome annals of medieval disputations, it would be hard to find another who, like him, was transformed overnight from a Jew wrestling with doubts into a relentless apostate—one so cruel, untruthful, and devoid of human sentiment. His contemporaries were well aware that a wrong was being committed, a wrong unprecedented in the history of Christianity. If somewhat similar deeds are recorded on the faded pages of ancient chroniclers, those did not have the sanction of the Church; in any event, they had been committed long before and were enveloped in the mists of past ages. But this was happening in broad daylight, before the very eyes of men who were accessible to the claims of reason and humanity. There is documentary evidence attesting to the fact that as early as January 1414 the municipality of Gerona petitioned the king to intervene on behalf of the Jews, “so that the measures instituted against them by the pope may be brought to a favorable conclusion.” And in August of that year a certain friar, acting as the emissary of that municipality, sought to persuade the pope and the king to alleviate the torments and the pressures to which the Jews were being subjected.²⁷

Throughout the whole protracted and despairing struggle, the Jewish scholars strove to defend their right to interpret the literature of their faith in accordance with the explanations and principles of their own tradition. They fought for freedom of worship—as far as such a fight was possible at all within the confines of that intellectual horizon—and for the right of a persecuted faith to remain loyal to its ancestral heritage and historic destiny. This task they performed with exemplary perseverance and steadfastness. It is questionable whether even the greatest scholar of the age, R. Hasdai Crescas, could have used any other method or achieved any other results. For, as has already been pointed out, the Tortosa disputation is not to be compared to that in which

R. Moses b. Nachman was engaged, because in that earlier day the official policy still favored the Jews, and scholastic sophistry had not yet reached the zenith of its development. Despite the limited range and the sterility of the Tortosa debate, the ideas advanced by the Jewish scholars should not be disdained. It is interesting to note how, on the whole, they did not adhere to the rationalism of Maimonides, but leaned towards the mythic, mystical viewpoint of R. Moses b. Nachman regarding faith in the Messiah, the reasons for the exile and other matters dealing with the inter-relationship between heaven and earth.

The scholars who participated in the Tortosa disputations were ready to die for their faith, and thereby doubtless fortified the spirits of many waverers. Except at some of the early sessions, they fought on a united and joint front in which there was no breach. Differences of opinion developed in their midst not in regard to the Aggada, but as to whether faith in the Messiah was one of the articles of the Jewish faith. R. Zerahia Halevi adopted the point of view of Maimonides, while R. Astruc Halevi and R. Joseph Albo followed the way of R. Hasdai Crescas. At a later date, R. Joseph Albo elucidated his philosophy in detail in his *Sefer ha'Ikkarim*. As a matter of fact, the same views had already been put forth by R. Moses b. Nachman, who had not, however, formulated them in a scholastic and dogmatic manner. Nachmanides' doctrine stood the disciples of his disciples in good stead, and they too were inspired by his spirit and his courage.

CONVERSION AND RENEWAL OF THE POLEMIC BETWEEN APOSTATES AND JEWS

For all that, the Tortosa debate brought evil consequences in its train. In March 1413 and the following months, Jews appeared in Tortosa, singly at first and then in groups, and declared that after listening to the feeble arguments of their

rabbis they had decided to become Christians.²⁸ Others—among them communal leaders—were baptized in their own localities. On February 2, 1414, the day after Halorki replied to the joint memorandum submitted by R. Zerahia Halevi and R. Mattityahu Hayitzhari, some members of the de la Cavalleria family and their households were baptized. Within a few weeks several of these men, under Christian names, were holding important administrative and political posts. Fernando de la Cavalleria, the former Bonafos, who was in King Ferdinand's service already in December 1412, is referred to on February 18, 1414, as the "counsellor and treasurer of the king of Aragon"—a title not then bestowed upon Jews. Don Vidal de la Cavalleria, son of the well-known Don Benvenist b. Labi, who was a Hebrew poet and one of the leading Jewish diplomatic spokesmen in the early stages of the disputation, took the Christian name of Gonzalo. He, too, was given a post in the administration of the government finances. Just as he had previously been a rising star in the firmament of Hebrew poetry, so now he showed himself acquainted with humanistic learning and translated the philosophical works of Cicero from the Latin into Castilian.²⁹ His teacher and family friend, the aged poet Solomon de Piera, joined him in going over to Christianity. Such faithlessness on the part of educated Jews of good family, who had been bred in the Hebrew tradition with its cultural treasures, was already quite common. Nevertheless, each and every instance of betrayal cut the loyal Jews to the heart. The sentiments of this generation are accurately reflected in the poems of Solomon Bonafed. The passages from his poems which are quoted below indicate that Don Vidal's friends had heard of his intention to embrace Christianity some time before he actually decided to take the step.

The records in the royal archives shed additional light upon the circumstances that preceded his conversion. The first official steps towards the conversion of Don Bonafos and Don

Vidal were taken in September and October 1413, the months of the long recess in the Tortosa debate, during which the Jewish delegates were not allowed to return to their homes. Vidal de la Cavalleria was one of those forcibly detained at the papal court in Tortosa, but Bonafos was at home in Saragossa. The king, who was then laying siege to the fortress of Balaguer where the rebellious count of Urgel had entrenched himself, wrote to the two men on September 25 instructing them to proceed at once to his military camp and to place their services at his disposal there. On the same day the king asked the pope to grant the Jews permission to undertake the journey, referring particularly to Don Vidal, who was then at Tortosa. The king revealed his intention of bringing these two notables into the Catholic fold, by remarking that their conversion would doubtless be followed by the conversion of most of the Jews of Saragossa. The pope, however, seems to have been in no hurry to release Don Vidal. On October 23 the king again asked the pope to let Don Vidal go, assuring him that the invitation was prompted only by his desire to persuade the Jew to embrace the Catholic faith, the path to which had already been illumined for him by Pope Benedict XIII. At the same time, the king informed Don Vidal that he had requested the pope's permission for the journey "in connection with some of our affairs for which your presence is required." Obviously, the king was inviting the two de la Cavallerias to his camp mainly for political and practical reasons; but he doubtless kept his promise to the pope that he would discuss with them the possibility of their conversion. Thus he would be doing his duty, religiously speaking, and at the same time making it possible for the men to continue in his service in a more legal manner than was possible while they remained Jews.

The first of Solomon Bonafed's poems which were dedicated to Don Vidal were probably written while these consultations were in progress. On the occasion of Don Vidal's conversion, "the scholar Bonastruc Desmaestre welcomed him with ele

gant poems, to which he replied most suitably in splendid language.” Solomon Bonafed also resorted to verse, expressing his distress at the defection of a man upon whom so many hopes had been pinned.³⁰ “A precious sun has set in our West—why has it not risen on our horizon?” To the remnant of Spanish Jewry it must indeed have seemed as if their sun had set with the apostasy of Don Vidal, and they vainly sought consolation in the hope that it would rise again and ascend high in the firmament, as morning and evening follow one another in the order of nature.

The goodly sun in our West has set. Why then
 Upon its circling path does it not rise again?
 Day and night in daily flight we see;
 How long—O say—shall no day
 Make its way after our night?
 How long shall we be in captivity,
 Our glory and our pride driven aside,
 While on wandering clouds we ride? . . .
 Can we await a better fate,
 When Time breeds woes without relief? . . .
 The eyes, the heart, they cannot bear
 To look upon this crushing grief.

But destiny, which had “stirred up the clamor of vicissitude to swallow soul’s pride,” and had “dismayed and alarmed this community of law and judgment, yea, even that great man who was once one of us,” ruled otherwise. Don Vidal had been to his friends a light shining in the darkness. With him they prospered and with him they fell.

We, once giant’s children, crowned with his diadem,
 Through love’s multiple wounds to grasshoppers are
 shrunk.

It had been thought that

His [Don Vidal’s poet’s] tablet would be a shield and
 buckler

His pen a javelin to rout our foes.

Solomon Bonafed, however, clung to the illusions that the renegade would yet return his embattled people.

Wake and stir, O silent flute,
Singing harp become so mute.
All the army drive away
Of our sorrow and dismay.

Loose the bonds of sadness
With these strings that sweetly sing.
Lift your voice and let them be
Borne upon a cherub's wing.

Tabernacle of the law,
Proud assemblage, lordly throng
Peace descend upon their forces.
In our flight may they be strong.

Peace upon their forces. Swiftly
Shall they go, and we once more
Walk together in the light
Of the sun that rises as before,
The goodly sun that in our
West Descended sadly to its rest.

But the poet's favorite did not repent. In June 1414, Don Vidal laid claim to a sum of two thousand *solidos* from the *aljama* of his native Saragossa in recompense for his mission to the papal court. In May of the same year, three months after his conversion, he appeared under the name of Gonzalo de la Cavalleria as a commercial agent of the king (*Comprador mayor del Senyor Rey*), as well as in various other official capacities which afforded him the opportunity to interfere in the affairs of his former community. His attitude towards his Jewish friends and relatives, like that of other apostates, was a blend of cordiality and malice. Once again Solomon Bonafed turned to Don Vidal and to the old poet, Solomon

de Piera, in the hope that he might still persuade them to reconsider:

To the time's musicians and the kings of song, who have undone the laws of language and renounced the covenant of rhetoric, the venerable Solomon de Piera and the scholar Don Vidal ben Lavi, as one lamenting their sudden mutation after many years I address this admonitory poem: ³¹

If Truth speak not when it is bid,
Let Love not slumber too;
And though your ways from you are hid,
Perceive my love for you . . .

Such poems were written and circulated in the ante-chambers of the auditorium at Tortosa; they were clear and outspoken. Perhaps the loyal poets really hoped that they might succeed in pricking the conscience of the apostates; or it may be that their barbed verse was born of the anger with the pope and his consistory which they could not directly express. The object of many brief satires was Solomon de Piera, the seventy-year-old poet who had tried to justify his conversion by means of the passage from the Talmud (*Sanh.* 99a), "The days of the Messiah are seventy years, as it is said [Isa. 23], 'And it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years,' " (presumably, Solomon de Piera had in mind the Christological interpretation of this passage by Raymond Martini). One such satire contains a reply to the old poet from Don Vidal, his former student and partner in treachery.

A poem sent by Solomon de Piera to his friend Don Vidal, upon his conversion at the age of seventy:

And if, my soul, thou wast forgot
By friends who thee remembered not,
And wast misled—but see

How seventy years of my life did pass
Like those at Tyre, for I was
Immersed in poesy.

Now seize the harp and pluck the string,
And answer me and we shall sing
To toast thy memory!

And Don Vidal's answer:

The daughter of Tyre hath been forgot
Such is the fate of the harlot.
She seizeth the drum and circleth the town
And hopeth thereby to come into renown:
Even so thy soul which whoreth and strayeth
Away from God, and disobeyeth.
Therefore art thou forgot forever,
Thy seventy years have been as never.
Take thee thy harp, O whore, and walk the city;
Perchance thou shalt be hired—out of pity! ³²

Afterwards [writes Solomon Bonafed], the breach was widened, and apostasy waxed strong. And I sent this poem to my worthy kinsman Astruc Bonafed, as one mourning the departure of so many distinguished personages from our community. And these were my words: ³³

Day and night I see the foes of my peace. What power
can I summon to succor me . . .
Or how can my heart be at rest . . .
When I see, as in a dream, Lavi [i.e., Don Vidal ben
Lavi, now an enemy],
Like a column of diamonds, pound day after day with
his demands upon my communal peers;
And when I see how hearts and faces are transformed,
and how the learned wise speak those things which my
Torah condoneth not.
Scholars who were precious beyond words, who girded

themselves with valor! My stars have changed and left me!

Yea, I remember them their company, I recall them not in parting, for ever since my heart and soul are lost! Their names are engraved on my forehead! How now, that they are gone, shall I erase those pleasant names from my doorposts?

I cry for desolation and dispersion! I weep like the sea for my redemption which exile postponeth!

Yea, I cry, and they laugh . . .

What comfort was to be had Solomon Bonafed found in enumerating those scholars who had remained loyal defenders of the faith: Zerahia Halevi, Joseph Albo and Astruc Halevi. Equally stirring emotions are evinced in the poem Solomon Bonafed sent to Profet Duran, in the hope of arousing the author of the *Ephod*, the great polemicist who was his senior in years and knowledgeability, to re-enter the religious campaign from which the best of compeers had deserted.³⁴

Approach, Ephod! . . .

See how I have been abandoned by the princes of poetry, the cherubs of the family of Lavi.

Bonafed laments “the loss of all his friends,” and bewails the flock which has been left without a shepherd after the death of R. Hasdai Crescas. But he consoles himself with the thought of the friends and scholars who have remained:

Woe to the shepherdless flock whose tenders are prey to the wolf and the bear!

Ask ye of Hasdai in his heavenly seat, to whom has he put his children in trust?

The prince of his age was he—alack, he died and this was its death-blow! But though Hasdai is dead, his goodness is not;

And his light is gone out, but the light of his book burneth yet to guide his disciples—

Levi, his son [Astruc Halevi], and Yitzhar [Mattityahu

Hayitzhari], yea, Joseph [Albo] too, who witness the truth of the Tor ah.

Alas for the channels of strong salvation, Zerahia [Halevi] the light, and Abez [Moses ibn Abez] the might of the pious!

Have we not Yehasel [Yehasel Hakaslari] as our for tress, of wisdom a shoot like his parents?

Have we not found a refuge in Aragon's remnant of scholars?

Or is it only a respite, like grain overlooked by the reaper,

Or like a foundationless booth, hanging in air without pillars?

Thus, the loyal scholars and communal leaders were compared, even by a faithful Jew like Bonafed, to grain forgotten in the fields; that is to say, only by sheer accident were they not swept away by the tempest of apostasy. It is not known whether or not Profet Duran responded to Bonafed's appeal.

While the rabbinical debaters were diligently preparing their weighty memoranda, Solomon Bonafed was composing lighter and spicier polemics. In 1414, Magister Astruc Rimoch, a physician and poet of Fraga who had protected faithful Jews in 1391, converted to Christianity together with his son, also a physician, and assumed the name of Magister Franciscus de Sant Jordi (George). Rimoch circulated a polemical epistle and sent a copy of it to a young member of his circle by the name of Shealtiel Bonafos, in the hope of encouraging the latter to follow his example.³⁵ The proficiency shown by writers like Franciscus in concealing their true intentions behind a spate of ingenious rhetoric here reaches its height. Franciscus had hoped that his beloved young friend would become a Christian like himself, but his wishes were thwarted by certain of Shealtiel Bonafos' loyal Jewish acquaintances. "Then came there to your house vain

and shiftless men, lost souls, wretched Jews, windy and flatulent fellows,” who strengthened Shealtiel in his faith and caused him to lose interest in the Christian God. “Thou hast forgotten the God that formed thee, who became a man like us for a pittance of days and jeopardized His life unto the death that He might avert the evil of thy first father who transgressed; but we and our land are in bondage.” Even prior to this Franciscus had attempted to buttress his claims for the Trinity and other Christian doctrines with biblical citations; but these his young friend had rebutted with the aid of “legends and lying conundrums which they of old have invented.” Repeatedly, Franciscus warns Shealtiel not to elect “the suffocation of thy soul” in Hell. “Except the fear of Isaac, thy father and thine owner, who was among the herdmen, were upon me”—that is, were it not for the memory of Shealtiel’s father Isaac (apparently the physician R. Isaac Bonafos Shealtiel, the son-in-law of R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet), Franciscus would have resorted to violent persuasion: “Surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her [your soul] alive.” He alludes to three of his friends who converted:

Three mighty men were there who came up from the washing [from baptism] and the fount of salvation, they are set upon sockets of fine gold . . . They have removed the dress of captivity, their excrementitious garments and filthy rags, and have put on the clothing of salvation . . . And the priests also which come near to the Lord, governors of the sanctuary and captains over thousands, the bread of their Lord they offer, and the wine of their feasts in bowls made like unto almonds.

“And if thou say in thine heart, I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, they are gone forth of me and they are not . . .” (that is to say, ‘Despite the great numbers of converts, I shall remain among the impoverished few who have kept faith with Judaism’), “I dwell in the midst of a people

of unclean lips [i.e., I wish to remain among them], and as he that lieth upon the top of a mast, in the vale of the demons . . . I will wait for the God of my salvation; Eri and Arodi and Areli [unimportant names which occur in the list of Israelites who went down to Egypt—Gen. 46.16] will be to me like Reuben and Simeon [Jacob's sons, two of the original twelve tribal chieftains of Israel], officers in the house of the Lord; Suah and Harnepher and Shual [I Chron. 7.36] shall come unto the Lord, for unto Him are they assembled, and the children that are born to them will be kings and governors, Jews in times to come" (i.e., the poor remnant will constitute the Jewry of the future): "These are expressions of despair; they are heavy with age; generation after generation your faith hath cast down many wounded and taken many in its pits who are spent without hope." In other words: these are vain hopes with which Jews have deluded themselves for countless generations. "They are matters of controversy . . . which kindle strife and make dreadful sounds in our ears, lightnings and noise. Can these dry bones live? Will rigid iron (Ezek. 27.19) grow like a cedar in Lebanon; will it bloom blossoms and yield almonds? Will the sick and the lame run upon the rock and flee together?" Franciscus begs his friend to abandon his illusory hopes and come over to the camp of the victors. "Come to us, accept, beloved friend, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity which has come down to us as a heritage from Moses, which bringeth out those which are bound with chains and setteth the solitary in families." . . .

Shealtiel replied to this letter with "gentle words," and Solomon Bonafed felt obliged to place his full rhetorical power at the latter's disposal and answer the old apostate properly. He pointed to the difficulties in the Christian doctrine of redemption:

Shall the Judge of all the earth condemn Himself to death and pour out His own blood to atone for His land and His people? Shall the sin of one sinner be the cause

‘for brethren to dwell together in unity’ [i.e., crucified on the cross, as related in the Gospels], for God and man to be joined together? Should not rather the two be driven further apart because of men’s sins? O ye heavens, be astonished! In place of this slave whose life is forfeit to the king, the king himself comes to drink the cup of his own wrath and so atone for the slave in his keeping, and this when the power of pardon is his to begin with, were the slave’s sins ever so red as crimson!

To paraphrase the argument, why should a king put his head in a noose to atone for a slave who merited the death penalty? Could he not simply pardon him, regardless of his sins? Is it not in God’s power to save humanity in some other fashion? The prophet had yet to come along, Solomon remarked, who could satisfactorily explain the mystery of why “a great builder of towers and cities should have to construct his columns with a thin little needle.” And why had God saved all the various nations, Ashdodites, and Luddites, and so forth, only to reject His own people, “and cast into the murky pit the day star, sun of the morning, His chosen portion, of whom it is said, ‘unto me the Children of Israel are servants.’ . . . If, as thou dost claim, thy Father that hath bought thee, He who dwelleth in the heavens, Who covereth Himself with light as with a garment, did become thy brother [i.e., a man like you] . . . then is God swiftly in flight like a weary wanderer upon a hilltop.” “Lo, when the mighty, living God revealed Himself at Sinai the earth roared aloud, yea, the heavens did glisten . . . and now He goeth in darkness like a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night.” “And is this all the fruit of His sin-offering? Why is this accursed earth not yet at rest?” Man still works the earth with the sweat of his brow, woman brings forth in sorrow and death reigns omnipotent: Adam’s sin has yet to be atoned for. “Such is not the portion of Jacob, although freely do we admit our guilt, for the sin of the first father has dominion over us, neither has it diminished, for

he is our flesh and blood. But whereas his flesh has doomed his soul, we in our souls remain pure and bound for eternal life, for there is no connection between his soul and ours." In other words, we believe only in the physical inheritance of Adam's sin, not in its spiritual inheritance. "Your ways are not our ways, but it is we who make the holy holier and do not lessen it . . . God is not man . . . Shall we on earth know His every step and footfall? Lo, the very seraphim stand alarmed, not knowing His place of glory, and asking where it may be!" "In conclusion, I say that as long as my soul is in my possession it shall meditate upon His Torah and be ravished always with its love. Now hath the Lord made room for this soul in faith: intellect shall be a girdle about its waist, and faith about its loins." We are saved, Solomon insists, by a faith which does not contradict the intellect, and by performance of the commandments, whose burden must not be lightened. Meanwhile, he speaks with customary sarcasm about the Christian cult of saints and about the sacraments of the Eucharist and confession. Because of their belief in these dogmas, Astruc Rimoch and his friends safely escaped catastrophe. "Ye are kings of the land, and ye shall lie down and none shall make you afraid." How different are these barbed ironies, which circulated in the antechambers to the auditorium of Tortosa, from the ponderous scholastic apologetics which the scholars within were forced to use!

One cruel question, however, troubled Solomon no end: Why should the exile continue? And why should the number of Jewish turncoats have been so great?

One thing notwithstanding will I confess to you, for it is like a sword in my bowels and like an upright flame among my ribs, ... to the length and breadth of our dispersion there is no answer; nor is there any reply to our scattered brethren who do not return. We are the two tails of the smoking firebrands,* the light of our Torah is

* Isaiah 7.4.

[hidden] in pillars of smoke, and every day new reverses are borne in upon us. In the eyes of the Gentiles we seem despicable—one righteous man as against ten traitors.

“Interpretations belong to God,” is Solomon’s only answer; the exile is a punishment for past sins and God, whose ways are just, shall soon have mercy upon His children. Solomon Bonafed possessed no peremptory answer which might have strengthened his faith in the historic destiny and future redemption of his people.

There is yet another passage of Solomon Bonafed’s which illuminates especially well the psychological background of his generation. It reads as follows: ³⁶

When I see how the hand of faith has been weakened and how the feet of many of our dispersed brethren falter for lack of hope; and how that they promote alien wisdom in order to extirpate the roots of religion; and how that our pious men believe that philosophical contemplation is more important than the performance of the commandments, so that their ignorance has led them to believe that the Torah is essential only to the welfare of the masses, who are raised in the lap of faith and tradition, whereas theory ... is knowledge of the books of nature and of Aristotelian metaphysics, which view they have hung upon a mighty tree, that of Maimonides, may he rest in peace, etc.

Bonafed sent a satirical poem on this subject to an intellectual who was still “at one in his Torah,” but who, to all intents and purposes, was an adherent of the philosophical school. This, too, took place in the “year of conversions,” 1414.

Bonafed’s words throw added light on the character of many hasty converts. In 1414, as in 1391, a variety of spiritual factors, both external and internal, undermined the faith of the Jewish community and impelled many of its less steadfast members to adopt Christianity. There is reason to assume that Vincent Ferrer’s sermons made an impression upon

both humble and educated classes, and that the Church's "victory" at Tortosa bewildered many. For all this, the more enlightened undoubtedly realized that the entire disputation was primarily an anti-Jewish demonstration, a great political trial held by a Church bent on destroying its few remaining Jewish opponents. It is most unlikely that all of Spanish Jewry should have recognized the religious validity of the outcome. Intellectuals like Vidal de la Cavalleria assuredly did not convert for reasons of conviction. Such men had received a thorough Jewish education. They had been taught the Bible and the Talmud, Hebrew philosophy and poetry, and, it would seem, a smattering of jurisprudence and early Renaissance humanistic learning—the sciences usually studied by Christian statesmen in those days. Overnight, Jews who had adhered to the highest material and spiritual values of their people became Christians, honored citizens of their townships and kingdom, jurists and administrative and diplomatic officials, sharing Christian privileges and Christian outlooks. Obviously, such men were not troubled by prolonged mental struggle, nor was their conversion the result of any inner spiritual crisis. Both before and after their conversion they remained Averroists, unaware of any uniqueness in their national tradition. Their attitude toward their persecuted people, composed as it was of artisans and simple folk, was one of contempt, and they had lost all desire to be a partner in its common destiny.

THE DISPUTATION ON THE TALMUD

No sooner was the disputation over the messianic doctrine ended at Tortosa than the other subject, "the errors, heresies, abuses and revilings of the Christian religion in the Talmud" was taken up and debated during the months of April and May, 1414. This question had been raised by Nicolas Donin in the days of Pope Gregory IX (see vol. I, p. 150), and Hieronymus de Sancta Fide also wrote a treatise on the subject, although

he had nothing new to say. The record of this part of the great debate is very defective.

The first pieces of information about this part of the disputation come to us through the speech of Hieronymus, from June 15, 1414. According to what is said in this speech, Hieronymus had already read before the assembled in Tortosa during the months of April-May, 1414, some talmudic passages which should have been censored, and had asked the Jews if they were ready to defend those passages or if they wanted to receive a copy of the said passages; to which the Jews had given no reply.³⁷ It is likely that the Jews had decided beforehand to maintain silence. In the meantime, confusion spread not only in the Jewish ranks, but in the Christian as well. The Council of Constance was soon to be opened (November 1414). For external reasons the papal court had been transferred to the village of San Mateo, which lay between Tortosa and the fortress of Peñíscola, in which the pope entrenched himself after having been deprived of his authority. The scene of the disputation was also transferred to the new site.

On June 15 in San Mateo, the apostate continued to produce talmudic quotations which he believed should be deleted. According to the minutes, the Jews had refrained from saying anything more than that Magister Hieronymus had misquoted several of the statements; he, in turn, promised to show them on the following day the passages from which the excerpts were taken, and according to the minutes he actually did so.³⁸ We have no means of determining whether this is true or not. Some time later,³⁹ Hieronymus asserted that the Jews, including R. Ferrer, had been dumbfounded and bewildered, ever since he showed them the original texts. The apostate's allegation cannot be true, inasmuch as all the passages adduced by him—both those mentioned in the minutes and those found in Halorki's treatise—were so commonplace that every Jewish scholar knew them by heart; and it does

not stand to reason that the Jewish scholars at Tortosa and San Mateo would have ventured to deny their existence. It was naturally not pleasant for the Jews to have to discuss such passages before the tribunal. In a letter written to King Ferdinand by one of his royal advisers, the statement is made that on June 23 “heresies and errors in the Talmud” were again discussed at San Mateo, and that most of the Jews had replied in writing that they had nothing to say; only two of the rabbis had been willing to continue the debate.⁴⁰ This happened a second time when Hieronymus produced still another series of sayings from the Talmud. In the minutes of July 7, 1414, a declaration made by the Jews is recorded as follows: ⁴¹

The Jews here assembled from all the communities in the kingdom, with the exception of R. Ferrer (R. Zerahia Halevi) and R. Albo, declare that, because of their ignorance and lack of enlightenment, they are unable to rebut the arguments of Hieronymus against the talmudic sayings cited by him, and do not know how to defend those sayings. They are, nevertheless, firmly convinced that, were the authors of those sayings now alive, they would have known how to defend them because, as wise and good men, they could not have uttered any unseemly statements.

The Jewish scholars accordingly petitioned the pope to allow them to return to their homes, since they had undergone many tribulations and suffered immeasurable and irreparable losses, and to cut short the debate, inasmuch as they did not have among them a champion competent and worthy of defending the Talmud. Their weakness was not to be taken as a reflection upon the Talmud. If the pope granted their petition, he would thereby be advancing law and justice, and the Jews would consider it an act of mercy and compassion.

At the same session R. Joseph Albo and R. Astruc Halevi submitted two separate memoranda, the contents of which

are not known. According to the minutes, Albo's arguments were refuted on the spot by Magister Andreas Bertrandi, an apostate Jew, the pope's almoner and a professor of Bible. But, according to a later note in the manuscript of the minutes⁴²—we do not know whether it was an editor's or Hieronymus's own—the professor did not complete his rebuttal of Albo's memorandum in a single session, and continued at a second session, where he dealt with both memoranda, and—as might be expected—is credited with refuting arguments in both. When Magister Andreas concluded his remarks, a Jewish scholar by the name of Magister Solomon Isaac rose and declared that the Talmud should be interpreted in the same manner as the Bible, namely, that its parts should be interpreted in the spirit of the whole Book, because the Jews regarded the Talmud as the God-given Oral Law, wherein nothing odious could be found. Several of the other scholars attempted—each in his own way, to interpret the difficult talmudic passages. Regarding a passage quoted by Halorki from Maimonides's *Mishneh Torah* (Isurei biah 21.9), Magister Solomon pointed out that R. Abraham b. David had dissented from Maimonides's view on the subject.⁴³ The pope then commanded R. Solomon Isaac to produce the book and indicate the passage. In his reply (28 Sept.), Magister Hieronymus asserted that R. Solomon had not shown him the passage in question—and no wonder, since the necessary books were not available in San Mateo—and that, in general, he did not approve of the latter's method of defense. Hieronymus summarized the debate in a long and rambling speech, and wound up by suggesting that the pope bring to trial the Jews who had made the declaration of July 7, 1414, because, although they had been well aware of their heresy, they had defended it nevertheless.⁴⁴ Hieronymus proceeded to quote—none too accurately—some sayings from the Talmud in an attempt to demonstrate that its authors were lacking in scholarship and morality, and had been guilty of unpardonable

sins. He called for a judgment condemning the Talmud; but six weeks passed before any action was taken.

On November 10, the final session of the debate was held at San Mateo. Once again Magister Hieronymus defined the purpose of the debate, and for the last time called upon the Jews to defend the heresies and vile utterances found in the Talmud, adding that if only a single passage were proved heretical, the entire Talmud would be deserving of blame. For was this not how the French Jews had dealt with the works of Maimonides which, also, contained only one or two slightly heretical statements?⁴⁵ The reply of the Jewish scholars having been previously formulated in writing, it was now read out by R. Astruc Halevi as a personal statement, the gist of which was as follows: Taken literally, the talmudic passages quoted by Magister Andreas and Magister Hieronymus seemed to be heretical, inconsistent with good morals, and fallacious. According to the traditional view taken by his teachers, however, these passages were to be interpreted in another sense. He himself admitted that he did not know the correct interpretation and did not intend to defend the passages; he therefore withdrew all his previous statements. All the Jews present, excepting Rabbi Ferrer (R. Zerahia), and R. Joseph Albo loudly acclaimed this solemn declaration. One must assume that, among those in agreement with R. Astruc's stand, was an eminent scholar like R. Mattityahu Hayitzhari; and R. Astruc himself had previously expressed a differing opinion. It therefore seems most unlikely that the Jews really had nothing more to say (see, for example, R. Solomon b. Simeon Duran's *Milhemeth Mitzvah*, written in refutation of Halorki's treatise). The stand taken by the Jewish scholars' may mean that they wished to escape further debate because their patience had given out; or, possibly, they had well-considered tactical reasons for their procedure, and left R. Zerahia and R. Joseph to carry on. If these two scholars made any statements thereafter, no record of them has been preserved. It

appears from an order of the Infante Alfonso, dated December 1, 1414, that the pope had already dismissed all the other Jews to their homes several days earlier.⁴⁶ The very form of the minutes of the debate on the Talmud indicates that the final sessions were held in an atmosphere of considerable tension. It was not only the Jews who wished to wind up the discussions; the pope himself also wished to cut them short, because of his political difficulties. The Jews were eager to hurry back to their communities no matter what, so as to try to save them from impending disintegration and collapse.

THE RESULTS OF THE DISPUTATION

Officially to terminate the Tortosa disputation, the pope and the king issued, in May and June 1415, detailed ordinances which in the main resemble the laws of Castile of 1412.⁴⁷ The chief new feature was a clause condemning the Talmud. Yet even in this respect the enemies of the Jews did not wholly succeed in their purpose of destroying the entire Talmud; instead, they revived the procedure followed in the 1260's and 1270's of deleting from the Jewish books passages found objectionable by the Christians. To that end, they demanded that the Jews turn over their books to them. Very harsh measures were taken to prevent social contact between Jews and Christians. (Steps had already been taken in this direction in 1413 and 1414.)⁴⁸ The impoverished Jewish communities were forced to leave their own quarters and move into others that were both unsanitary and unsuitable for business purposes. While these decrees were being carried out, communal leaders were wasting their time in the sterile debates at Tortosa and San Mateo. In August 1414, about twenty Jews from Saragossa were commanded to appear simultaneously at the papal court. The absence of so large a number of leaders—to say nothing of those who had been acting as official spokesmen at Tortosa—would have seriously

interfered with the conduct of local communal affairs. The king's son, Don Alfonso, intervened on behalf of the Jews, and asked the pope to postpone the date of their appearance until they had farmed out the communal taxes and completed the vintage.⁴⁹

In some instances, delegates to Tortosa came back to their homes as converts and claimed fees from their former communities for their services, which had not been satisfactory.⁵⁰ In May 1414 and thereafter, Vincent Ferrer toured Aragon with his bands of flagellants and invoked the authority of the State to compel the Jews to listen to his sermons.⁵¹ In a number of localities the Christian population made attacks upon the Jews. Late in October the Infante Don Alfonso sent a detailed report to his father the king on what had happened in the city of Daroca, the home of R. Joseph Albo who, jointly with R. Zerahia Halevi, was then defending the Talmud against its detractors with his last resources. The local Christians employed all sorts of devices to force the Jews either to adopt Christianity or to leave the city. The Jews thereupon appealed to the infante, and the latter sent orders to Daroca that no further steps were to be taken against the Jews because compulsory conversions were desired neither by God nor by the king. But with the consent of the bailiff, under whose authority the Jews lived, the adversaries of the Jews continued to harass them by means of arrests and confiscations of property, on the pretext that they were thereby preventing them from running away. And so it went, day after day. The bailiff authorized five or six men to arrest and molest the Jews as they saw fit. These fellows walked up and down the Jewish quarter, "like lunatics," arresting every Jewish man and woman who refused to be converted. Finally, under cover of night, most of the Jews let themselves down with ropes over the city walls and fled to other localities. Of the forty families that had remained in Daroca after the many conversions, only ten persons were

left, and most of these were in prison. The infante sent the bailiff instructions to release the prisoners on bail and to treat them humanely, so as to encourage those who had fled to return. “And His Majesty will see,” wrote the prince to his father, “how much the Jews were molested and what means were employed so that it might be claimed that their conversion had been due to illumination by the Holy Ghost.” The emissary of the prince had been subjected to all kinds of mistreatment.

And from what they did to this emissary of ours His Majesty may infer how the Holy Ghost acted upon them in the matter of the conversions . . . And let not His Majesty think that I would interfere for anything in the world with the conversion of any unbeliever and his adoption of the holy Catholic faith. On the contrary, I would rejoice in every sinner who repents and returns to our God and Creator; and I would give all possible aid in such a matter. But in this case, when the conversions resulted from overt pressure and coercion, there can be no talk of deeds pleasing in the sight of God, for He desires voluntary and not compulsory sacrifices. Moreover, experience has shown that, contrary to expectations, the recent converts to the holy Catholic faith still continue most meticulously and reverently—even in an exaggerated form—in their perversities and faith in the false religion in which they believed before the illumination of the Holy Ghost came upon them. I can testify that I have observed this in my own private concerns and at my court.⁵²

As was the case in Daroca, a number of Aragonese communities were destroyed, while in others the most prominent and richest members went over to Christianity, and none except artisans, poor folk and a few pious men and students of the Torah remained faithful to their religion. Like Castilian Jewry, the Jewry of Aragon was on the verge of complete ruin. But in 1416, Benedict XIII was deprived of his papal

authority and Ferdinand I died in April of that year. Thereafter Vincent Ferrer's wild men no longer exerted any influence on politics, and the Jews began gathering strength.

THREE BOOKS FROM THE PERIOD OF THE CONVERSIONS

The intellectual mood of that critical period in the life of Spanish Jewry is reflected in three books. Joseph Albo, one of the youngest and most intrepid spokesmen for the defense at Tortosa, wrote a book entitled *Sefer ha'Ikkarim* ("Book of Principles") as a kind of summary of all the discussions of the age. Like R. Hasdai Crescas when he wrote his *Or Adonai*, Albo aimed primarily at combatting the factors which encouraged apostasy, but he saw fit to do so in his own way, even though his philosophical powers were inadequate for the purpose. In his book, the influence of Christian scholasticism, especially that of Thomas Aquinas, is more apparent than in the works of his predecessors. However, his experiment of merging the scholastic method with the Judeo-Arabic philosophical tradition did not work out very well.⁵³ Albo wished to elucidate the concept of articles of faith, a matter which had given rise to confusion at the great Tortosa disputation. He formulated his doctrine on the basis of three great articles of faith which are to be found only in the Law of Moses and which comprise all the commandments to the last detail. In so doing, he also offered an answer to the question which provoked so much discussion at the time of the conversions, namely, "whether a person who professes a given religion is permitted, or obliged to investigate the principles of his religion and faith." Albo's reply to this question was in the affirmative, holding that such examination could only, in the long run, strengthen and fortify the Jewish religion. In dealing with the problem of Revelation and belief in the Reward and Redemption, he reviewed all the official and unofficial disputations from the days of Abner of Burgos down to his own time. Albo attacked Christianity

as well as philosophical skepticism, appealed to the forced converts and to the undecided, emphatically stressed the popular tendencies of the Jewish tradition and referred to the great miracle that his persecuted people had been saved and would continue to be saved by the power of the miraculous. Albo's philosophical system obviously contained nothing that could infuse new life into the national tradition; but, for those who did not particularly require this sort of invigoration, who yearned for aggadic exhortation and enjoyed the added stimulus afforded them by philosophy, Albo was a powerful, consoling and convincing preacher. The whole purpose of his book was to save his people from their consuming and unparalleled despair:

We have returned to the status of a slave, and not of a slave who has any expectations of being liberated by his friends or kinsfolk . . . but like a slave who despairs of ever being freed. Such a slave is enthralled by harsh masters, has no good thing of his own, and has not even the right to practice his own religion and faith. Nor has he sons or honor or wealth, for whatever is acquired by a slave is in turn acquired by his master . . . So it is with us. Our Exile has been protracted so long, and our affliction increased so much, that we have almost, God forbid, abandoned hope of redemption and become like the slave who despairs of freedom, seeking only to maintain our abased and impoverished selves in this our Exile.

Facing the growing despair, Joseph Albo stressed the duty to hope and to wait.

Hope and expectation are essential to a believer in order to obtain the mercy which follows upon trust. . . Hope is of three kinds . . . The most praiseworthy of the three is the hope for God's grace.

Despair not of hope in the Lord because of your many transgressions. Ye will not be redeemed by your merits,

for these will not suffice: grace alone will redeem you from the depths of misery . . . And now that we have sunk so far in degradation and poverty that nearly nothing is left us, we stand in need of the greatest possible measure of grace.

The calamity which had befallen the Jews came only to put their faith to the test.

No man, no matter how well he keeps the covenant and Torah and worships the Lord, can be thoroughly assured of his faith and fealty to the covenant as long as he is wholly at ease and at peace in his home and successful in all his affairs, his flax neither withering nor his wine going sour (Sanh. 101a); but when misfortune befalls him and days of poverty overtake him and pursue him to the breaking-point and he yet remains uncorrupted—then has he passed the test of righteousness for those who worship out of true love, for though many and great afflictions have come upon him he has yet persisted in his steadfastness, nor has he caused the hearts of his brethren to weaken, but has trusted in the Lord at all times.

“He who trusts in the Lord and awaits fulfillment of the prophecies should do so after the manner of one who hopes for things that must assuredly come to pass. Hence the psalmist says: ‘I wait for the Lord . . . more than watchmen for the morning.’ ” (Ps. 130.5–6). Towards the end of his book Joseph Albo put aside the casuistical, and for him basically uncongenial, methods of scholastic debate, and reverted to the faith from which Jews had drawn their support ever since the time of Abraham.

There was yet another man who wrote about this critical period as it affected his generation. This was R. Shemtob ibn Shemtob, the author of *Sefer ha-Emunoth* (The Book of Beliefs).⁵⁴ Nothing is known of his private life or social position, but he says of himself: “Because of my sins I have seen no

light all my life, and ever since my youth I have been reared by the pain of evil decree and apostasy.” For all the difficult problems of his age, he offers one simple solution: it is the study of philosophy that has caused disaster and apostasy; the true interpretation of the commandments and of Jewish tradition and the history of Israel is to be found only in the doctrines of the Cabala. R. Shemtob makes no distinction between the various philosophical systems and currents of his age, but proceeds straightaway to identify the essence of Maimonides’ philosophy with Averroism, which wishes to deprive positive religion of all its value and glory. The majority of those who adhere to the philosophical approach deny the existence of Providence and of future reward and punishment. They consider the soul to be but “a preparation for the attainment of intelligible concepts.”

And from these premises it follows that it is a vain thing to hold that the soul will be rewarded for its good deeds and punished for its evildoing, or to have faith in Paradise and Hell and the great day of Judgment and the Resurrection of the dead, or to cherish any hope for the body once the soul has departed, for what is it then but a stinking carcass? Nor is the wise man better off than the fool, or the righteous different from the wicked, for what shall their intellect avail them if it remains with the corpse that is trodden underfoot? Equally it follows that of the righteous man, who strives after justice all his life but whose intellect is not actualized so that it might become, along with the other actualized intellects from among the various nations, one of the Intelligences, nothing remains [after death]; whereas the evildoer, if his wickedness, no matter how great its extent, does not keep him from intellection, so that he acquires true knowledge in spite of it, he, regardless of his bad qualities, cannot be prevented [from surviving].

Such views, according to R. Shemtob, were responsible for the ruin of Spanish Jewry. Indeed, originally true wisdom had

been the portion of Israel, and in that wisdom alone rather than in any political power did their greatness lie, for they were “strangers and sojourners” even in their own land (Lev. 25.23). With the destruction of the Temple, however, Israel lost all its wisdom, the dregs of which passed to the Gentiles. Therefore,

many of our honored and distinguished brethren throughout the Exile, both in Spain and in the other kingdoms, were compelled to study and investigate the ways of Greek, Moslem and Christian, and other nations which were likewise drawn to scientific observation. And though our holy rabbis [of the talmudic period] forbade the study of Greek wisdom, many of them [i.e., of the Spanish scholars] were close to the royal court,

and it was consequently permissible for them to study such Gentile sciences as medicine and astronomy. The end result was that they allowed these sciences to usurp the place of faith and tradition, no matter how much they tried to compromise between the two. And so,

if a wise and truthful man will ponder the matter well, he must conclude that (according to the philosophers) there is no place here for the pious man, for him whose only desire is to pursue righteousness and refrain from violence, who fears the Lord of the universe and obeys the Torah and its commandments and sanctifies God’s name in private and in public to the end that no evil may befall him. For his good deeds avail him not, and though he lay down his life in martyrdom, it makes not the particle of a difference. And as for the wicked man, who blasphemes all his life long, there is no Providence to punish him; and when he dies, he is none the worse off.

And when I examined the writings [of the various philosophers] . . . a flame was kindled within me, for a vile plague has spread among the Children of Israel. For what I saw was that it has ever been the great scientific in-

investigators who are the deniers and apostates. Nor can there be any doubt that the affliction and apostasy which have befallen us, together with the ruin of our communities, derive from these philosophers and sophists, who have sinned against the protecting tabernacle (?) and breached the hedge [of Torah]. These has the multitude followed, even until our bones are dried up and our hope lost. For once it is agreed upon that there is no final reckoning of good and evil, and that even to the best of men the Divine emanation comes only by virtue of contemplation, why, then, should such a man not better reach his destination as a freed man than as a slave and vassal to Almighty God?

R. Shemtob gives an eschatological interpretation of the catastrophe of the age.

Hence [according to the principle of the transmigration of souls], we learn that a man is justly judged in conformity with his deeds . . . And from this it follows that all our exiled, and all our murdered, aggrieved and oppressed, have received absolute justice, for it is said, “The Son of David shall not come until all the souls have ceased to transmigrate” (Ab. Zar. 5a) . . . And when this transmigration shall have ceased, the Divine light will appear through the medium of new and pure forms [souls], for it is beyond a doubt that since the destruction of the First Temple no new souls have been created, but rather have they all continued to transmigrate . . . Nevertheless, the generations progressively degenerate, and with the coming of each new generation the forces of evil (*kelipoth*) increase . . . so that, verily, all the exiled [souls] have deservedly transmigrated into Exile and there fallen into Gentile hands, bearing out the verse “therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom” (Isa. 65.7); for the longer the Exile continues, the more the Divine Light disappears and the maidservant reigns . . . and the brazen and heretics of former generations transmigrate . . . [And of this] our blessed rabbis have said (Sanh. 97a) “The Son of David shall not

come until heresy hath over-run the world” . . . And Moses said, “And there ye shall serve other gods”; and Ezekiel said [20.32], “And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say: We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.” The conclusion of the matter is that the generations which are nigh to redemption are the evil figs [Jer. 24], and it is they which were taxed to bear their sins and enter the refiner’s furnace, and were found dross . . . For lo, all these calamities and decrees are but corrections for our iniquity. Whosoever shall suffer them and make of his soul a trespass offering (Isa. 53.10) shall live everlastingly in a world all good; but whosoever shall go into apostasy (?), his world shall be eternal destruction; and this was the meaning of Daniel, may he rest in peace, when he said [12.7], “It shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” This is to say, when all the souls shall have come to an end. For then—the souls having been scattered hither and thither and having been refined and tested in the furnace of poverty and by the princes of the nations, and the power of the holy people having been swallowed up in them and by their power—shall the Almighty Lord awaken to prosecute our battles; and then shall come the great day of judgment whereon the recalcitrant and the sinner shall be sentenced for ever and ever.

All that had transpired, R. Shemtob argued, had happened justly, and not, as the astrologer-fatalists claimed, by force of necessity.

And if, to demonstrate that these evils are not under [divine] control, thou shouldst cite the verse [Zech. 1.15], “I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction,” I answer: The prophet did not say that the Gentiles afflicted Israel more than was

God's decree, but rather meant to say that the Gentiles understood that through them God's displeasure toward Israel was multiplied. The illustration of this is that Israel's sins were the cause of its exile, by means of which it became justly subjugated to the Gentiles, but because of the subjugation it sinned the more and compounded the crime. Therefore, the verse is true which says, "And ye shall there serve other gods," albeit God forbid that such should be His decree; for rather it comes to inform us that for its sins was Israel conveyed into the hands of its subjugators, who compelled it to idol-worship, which is contrary to God's commandments.

Here we have the first indications of that obstinate *converso* ideology which, by extenuating the practice of forced conversion, was eventually to lead to further catastrophe.

The third figure is R. Solomon Alami (or ben Lahmish), author of the *Iggereth Musar* (Epistle on Morality).⁵⁵ Turning from theory to practice, R. Solomon continued the tradition of social criticism which, for two-hundred years, the pious men of Spain had employed with little success. He writes as an eye-witness:

And of late we have been beset by evil up and down the provinces of Castile and Catalonia in 1391, where many communities were destroyed, both small and large. And twenty-two years thereafter [i.e., in 1412] those that still remained in Castile were a byword and a mockery . . . for they were forced to change their manner of dress and to refrain from commerce, tax-farming and handicraft. . . . They who had abode securely in their homes were driven out from their pleasant palaces to dwell in tombs and places of concealment. O worm of Jacob! They who were brought up in scarlet now embrace dunghills! Summer and winter, all Israel's citizens shelter in tabernacles, in everlasting contempt. As for our oppressing tax-gatherers, no sooner were they de-

prived of farming the taxes than the majority of them left their religion, for none was master of a handicraft by which to earn his livelihood. And in the face of ruin, hardship and confinement, many artisans, too, left the fold, for when they saw the mischance and the travail they could no longer stand in the presence of vicissitude. Such, too, was the case with the remaining communities in the Kingdom of Aragon, where a new king arose to issue new decrees. Who hath heard the like! Sucklings at their mothers' breasts cry for hunger and thirst, and barebodied children perish in snow and frost.

R. Solomon advises those who are at a loss,

When the heathen arise to prevent thee from following after the Lord and to banish thee from abiding in his inheritance, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land where thou mayest adhere to His religion. Be bold as a pard (Mishnah Abot 5, 20) . . . to flee from the land of His displeasure, and let not thine eye spare thy furnishings and thy beautiful possessions, for all these things are as nothing in comparison to His divinity.

R. Solomon has no political program for the restoration of his people. He is, however, greatly concerned with improving moral and social conditions among the remnant of Spanish Jewry, for herein he sees the prime cause of the disaster.

And if thou say in thine heart: Wherefore come these things upon us? Know and believe that we brought it upon ourselves, because for the greatness of our iniquity were our skirts uncovered (Jer. 13.22). . . . Our iniquity and our sin have turned away these things (Jer. 5.25) . . . We have received measure for measure. Because we arrayed ourselves in their apparel, they have clothed us in different garments, so that we might appear as aliens in their midst and arouse derision and contempt in the sight of all; and because we have trimmed the corners of our

beards and our hair, they have compelled us to let our hair and our beards grow long like mourners; and because we have built here in Exile, upon the ruins of our holy Temple, luxurious houses and beautiful and spacious chambers, we have been banished from our homes to the field and the dung gate.

Solomon Alami felt particular warmth for the artisan class, which formed the bulk of the Jewish population of Spain. “Learn a trade, that thou mayest earn a livelihood from thy work!” He believed that the main responsibility for the disaster lay with the perfidious tax-farmers, in other words, with the upper class; for it was these who, when the laws of 1412 shut off their source of wealth, converted to Christianity, having learned no honest trade by which otherwise to maintain themselves. Only afterwards did the unadvised and refugeless artisans follow their example. No less culpable than the rich were the rabbis, who came from the same upper stratum, and who

in mutual hate and jealousy bought and sold the Torah with their gifts, desiring nought but to exercise their pedantry and devise novel (talmudical) interpretations . . . and new treatises which were of no use whatsoever. . . . And they cast behind them its [i.e., the Torah’s] righteousness, purity and holiness . . . and favored certain litigants against others and hid their abominations from the people.

These same men, having been educated on secular wisdom, believed neither in Providence nor in reward and punishment; they held the religious commandments in light esteem and haughtily displayed scientific books in the synagogues to show off with them in face of their people.

Above all, Solomon dwelt on the social degeneracy of the Jewish courtiers,

these great men of the community who stand before kings in their castles and courts and whom God has

caused to be favored by their captors ... so that the kings exalted and elevated them, appointing them to administer the kingdom and placing the keys to their treasures in their hands . . . And they grew insolent in their wealth and greatness . . . And they built palaces and took for themselves large and good mules for their chariots . . . And their wives and daughters dressed like princesses and great ladies . . . And they despised religion and humility and all work and handicraft. . . . And each man of them envied his fellow, and spoke ill of him to the king and his deputies . . . Their hearts and their eyes were set greedily to acquire the estates of others in this, the land of their enemies, and to shed innocent blood in their assemblies, and to wrong and oppress their inferiors. O ye devisers of evil! . . . who enact laws that are not good, who evade the yoke of taxes to impose it upon the poor, who by their evil conduct have become vile in the eyes of their adversaries . . . Then He raised His hand against them and banished them from the royal and princely courts. And when there remained not a single Jew with access to the king, to promote His people's welfare and intervene on its behalf, then were the destroyers able to uproot our trunk. . . . Most of the decrees and calamities which have lately befallen us have been brought about by the rebellious sons of our people, who revealed to the heathen, whose bonded slaves we were, all our secrets and evil ways toward them. Verily, we have desecrated God's holy name in their midst, for we have dealt with them guilefully and deceitfully and shrewdly misled them with unfit laws, so that now they despise us and look upon us as thieves, swindlers and adulterers, even as a band of traitors; and everything that is vile and refuse they say is of the Jews.

This is an apt summation of over two-hundred years of zealous preaching on this very subject by both Jewish and Christian moralists. In these little books there is no trace of

a purposeful program for improvement. Even the best men of the age thought only in terms of safeguarding the *status quo*. Thus, when fortune took a turn for the better and the Jewish community was no longer threatened with destruction from the outside, the world returned to its old ways.

THE JEWS AND THE CONVERSO PROBLEM

THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE 15TH CENTURY

Sudden changes in the Catholic Church and the royal courts of Spain saved the Jews at a moment when they were on the verge of destruction and made it possible for them to build up their life anew. In Castile, John II (1406–1454) took over the reins of government and considered renewing the war against the Moslems. In Aragon, Alfonso V (1416–1458) ascended the throne. He also inherited the crown of Sicily and devoted his best energies to that country. Both kings were more interested in secular culture than in religious fanaticism, and showed willingness to restore the Jewish communities to their former status for the benefit of

their own countries. Pope Martin V, a mild-natured man, was ready—and all the readier for his opposition to the schismatic, Pedro de Luna—to revoke the latter's edicts. Delegates from the Jewish communities of all the European countries appeared at the papal court in Rome, and emissaries from Spanish Jewry negotiated at the royal courts of Spain with favorable results. As early as 1419–1422, the Spanish kings and the pope abolished the whole series of anti-Jewish edicts that had been promulgated during the previous generation. The Jews' copies of the Talmud and their synagogues were returned to them. Some of the economic and social restrictions were abolished by law, while others fell into desuetude.¹ Nevertheless, things were no longer as they had been before 1391. A glance at the map of the Jewish communities in fifteenth-century Spain confirms this statement.

In the Kingdom of Aragon, only the communities of the province of Aragon escaped disaster. The continuous conversions notwithstanding, the Saragossa community still numbered about two hundred families. In all the other provinces of Aragon, however, only tiny groups remained, refugees from the sword and apostasy. In Catalonia—particularly in Gerona and Cervera—there were some small communities, and in the province of Valencia only tiny communities like that in Murviedro. As already mentioned, all attempts to reestablish Jewish communities in the great seaports of Barcelona and Valencia resulted in utter failure. And the Jewish community that went back to the capital of Majorca and reestablished itself there was presently dispersed in disgrace and apostasy as a consequence of the blood-libel trial of 1432.² At the time of the Expulsion, the Jewish population of the Kingdom of Aragon was estimated at about six thousand families—not a large number in proportion to the total population.

The Jews paid taxes to the royal treasury, but exerted no

influence on the political life of the country. There were no Jews except *conversos* in the service of the State. Only a few of the many Jewish physicians achieved recognition—by serving the Gentile authorities—as did Cresques, the physician and astrologer of John II of Aragon, or R. Abraham Shalom, .author of *Neve Shalom*, whom the Christians of Cervera chose as their municipal physician.³ It is not clear why the Jews of Aragon were not permitted any share in the business affairs of the court and the State during the reigns of Alfonso V and John II (1458–1479), both not overly religious Renaissance monarchs. Perhaps the kings sought to curry favor in this way with the Estates; or perhaps there were then no Jews in Aragon who were able and willing to hold high office. At all events, Jewish life in Aragon was more tranquil and unpretentious than before 1391. Jewish judges did not try criminal cases. There were no sensational denunciation trials. Nor were there any violent struggles within the aljamas for supremacy. The government and its officials closely supervised the internal affairs of the aljamas in every detail, just as they supervised the municipalities.

The great majority of Spanish Jews lived in Castile. As a result of natural growth and the opportunities for diffusion in the villages and small towns, the Jewish population of Castile again began to rise in the fifteenth century. According to the most modest estimates, there were living in Castile at the time of the Expulsion 30,000 Jewish families, i.e., about one or one-and-a-half per cent of the total population. This figure is considerably higher than the estimate of Jewish population in Castile in the thirteenth century. To it should be added the *conversos*, whose number ran into tens of thousands, and most of whom were Jews in fact. The political prestige of the Jews had sunk considerably, but they still enjoyed a certain economic and social standing. Central communities, like those which had been renowned before 1391 for their wealth and spiritual stature, no longer existed. Seville,

Toledo, Burgos—the glory had departed from them all. The center of gravity in Jewish cultural life had shifted from the large cities to the small towns. Only in a few communities were there more than fifty or a hundred families, but in the small towns these formed from one-third to one-half of the total population.

As before 1391, the Jews in such localities were merchants, shopkeepers and, in the main, artisans. The economic and social character of most of the communities was heterogeneous, as in former times. Every community had a few physicians, tax collectors and other men of education and wealth who had financial connections with the government, or with the nobles and the bishops. There were many Jewish physicians who served the municipalities under contract at fixed salaries. The other Jews supported themselves by selling goods in their shops and, mostly, by handicrafts. In towns like Hita and Buitrago, a number of Jews owned vineyards, fields and pasture lands, and the wealthier among these landowners held a substantial number of vineyards in their possession. At the time of the Expulsion, there were fifty or sixty Jewish house and landowners in these two towns. The economic development of each community took a different form, depending upon local conditions; for most of them no data are available. In Toledo, at the time of the Expulsion, the Jews owned forty houses. They were still living in their handsome old quarter, but were evidently unable to occupy its whole area; some Christians also lived in their midst. On the other hand, the community of Talavera de la Reina, formerly attached to Toledo, definitely flourished. Royal tax officials continued to record in their registers communities whose populations had dwindled and sunk into poverty, and which were therefore unable to pay the taxes levied upon them according to the official assessment.

In course of time the Castilian communities revived their autonomous institutions, which had been models of their kind

in their day; but they certainly did not regain all those rights of jurisdiction which had set them apart from the other Jewish communities. In most of the Castilian cities there were some Jews who were conspicuous for their wealth and close connections with the court, and whose wisdom and culture enhanced the prestige of their communities and also of their cities; but now such intellectuals were to be found among the Christians as well. Owing to the conversionist trend, the old communal aristocracy had decreased in numbers, and only after some time did other wealthy and cultured men step forward to take its place.⁴

The Saragossa community offers an excellent example of the ill effects of apostasy upon social conditions. According to an edict issued by Alfonso V in 1417, which was doubtless based on a report from local sources, the community had been impoverished by persecution; its population had dwindled, and its organization had been disrupted. Men competent to administer the communal affairs refused to take office because of cares and anxieties of a general nature and personal preoccupations and troubles. And so the communal leadership passed into the hands of “the artisans and the little people and men inexpert in these matters, who ought rather to be the led than the leaders.” “The tailors render judgment, and the saddlers sit in courts of arbitration!”—proclaimed the poet Solomon Bonafed, who spared none of the unfortunates who remained in Saragossa after the Tortosa debate. The rabbi of these people, R. Joseph Yeshuah, was described by Bonafed as one who “misled the masses and caused them to stumble.”⁵ Yet this scholar did have certain merits: R. Isaac Abohab quoted some of his teachings in his own sermons. In general, it may be doubted whether all the estimable artisans who still headed the communities were really only ignoramuses and malefactors, as Bonafed portrayed them. It would seem that in his old age, this satirical poet forgot that it was thanks to just these sim-

ple men and not to the notables of the community, that the flame of Jewish faith was not quenched. A similar situation undoubtedly prevailed in the Castilian communities until the emergence of a new aristocracy, at which point the conflict between the wealthy and the humbler folk broke out again, although on a smaller scale than in the olden days.

In general, the official relationships between the municipalities and the aljamas could not be considered satisfactory. The urban population did not welcome the revocation of the edicts of 1412–1415, and at times even persuaded the papal and royal courts to re-institute them with some minor changes. In a number of towns the authorities compelled the Jews to live in separate quarters, made them wear the badge of shame on their garments, deprived them of their synagogues and cemeteries, and tried to convert them with the aid of fanatical monks who incited the multitude. The municipal authorities also denied the Jews their economic rights, excluding them from the commercial centers of the cities and not allowing additional Jews to settle in their localities. On occasion the Jews defended themselves as in their prosperous past: in the town of Haro in 1453, for example (see vol. I, 200).⁶ Religious incitement against the Jews increased in the course of the fifteenth century. There was no end of talk about Jewish “usury,” though there were fewer Jewish moneylenders than formerly and more Christian moneylenders than ever. Blood-libel trials were no longer so rare as in former times. Religious fanaticism was enkindled, in particular, in the matter of the *conversos*, which will be discussed below.

None the less, there were also good relations between Jews and Christians. In some of the towns Jewish physicians treated their Christian neighbors either on behalf of the municipality, or unofficially. In most of the cities a few Jews farmed the royal or municipal taxes. At the courts of the nobles, Jews could be found serving as physicians, stewards

and purveyors, political and legal advisers, and, at times, also as lawyers and trustees who appeared before the Christian courts. The Jews appear to have regained the posts they had held in the State before the period of conversion. The Acts of the financial administration of Castile since about 1430 have been preserved in their entirety.⁷ Anyone who goes to the trouble of diligently scrutinizing these documents will be able to write a more detailed account of the political and economic activities of the Jewish rich of this period, and might even be able to delineate their personal characteristics. Judging by the data which the present writer has gleaned from these archives, it would appear that Jews controlled about two-thirds of the indirect taxes and customs within the country, on the frontier and at the ports. Occasionally, in conjunction with tax-farming, Jews also engaged in purveying grain, arms and clothing for the army that was then fighting the Moslems. A whole network of Jewish tax-farmers and collectors was spread over the entire kingdom. Their chief was a Jewish tax-farmer general, who also acted as the king's treasurer. This post was held, during the reign of John II, by Don Abraham Bienveniste of Soria. Jointly with a Christian partner, and also by himself, Don Abraham organized the collection of customs in the whole kingdom with the aid of assistants and merchants—most of them Jews—living in various cities of the kingdom. Both this tax-farmer and his successors were very prominent at the royal court, and exerted political influence as well. At the court of the king's son Henry (IV), the philosopher R. Joseph ibn Shemtob (1450) served as "physician and auditor of accounts (*Contador Mayor de Cuentas*) to his highness the prince and a member of his council." R. Joseph was even sent to the court of Portugal in connection with a royal match (1455). He was also regarded by the Christians as a man of wide secular culture. But his high standing aroused the hatred of the Christians, and he was murdered under circumstances of which little is

known. The post of accountant (*contaduria*) was, however, never again given to a Jew during this period, and all departments and offices carefully avoided appointing Jews to posts of obvious political significance. In general, Jews had no part in the administration of the currency or of the direct taxes, let alone in the judiciary, which had formerly been connected with the collection of taxes. Nevertheless, they still had wide powers which enabled them to take a bold stand when dealing with important Christian institutions, thereby incurring the latter's hatred. There was even an instance of a Jewish tax-collector being killed in the performance of his duty.

In circles close to the government and the courts of the kings and princes, intimate ties of friendship were cemented between Jews and Christians. About thirty years after the Expulsion, R. Solomon ibn Verga described, in his *Shebet Yehudah* (Sceptre of Judah), how Jews had moved freely in the courts of the kings and princes. And, though his reminiscences were written in the form of fiction, something of the authentic background of those days is retained in his book. The official records also mention friendly intercourse between Jews and Christians as something that was taken for granted. On the Jewish festivals, Christians visited their Jewish friends at the synagogue and in the *succah*. According to testimony taken at the trials of the Inquisition, Christian notables of Cuellar—from both the ducal court and the town—had in the 1470's visited the synagogue on Rosh Hashanah in order to hear the sermon of "rabbi Samuel, physician to his grace the Duke" (who was converted to Christianity in the year of the Expulsion). Rabbi Samuel had a great reputation as a philosopher and preached on philosophical themes; and it was therefore thought permissible for Christians to listen to his sermons, since he did not often introduce references to his religion.

In the years 1422–1433, R. Moses Arragel of the city of

Guadalajara, at the request of Don Luis de Guzman, head of the Order of the Knights of Calatrava, prepared a translation of the Bible and a commentary in the Castilian tongue. His book, which has been preserved as a magnificently illuminated manuscript, opens with correspondence between the Jewish translator and commentator and the head of the order and Franciscan scholars in Toledo concerning their joint undertaking. The task of illuminating the manuscript, being unlawful for the rabbi, was carried out by Christians. R. Moses Arragel was commissioned to collect and collate the writings of the Jewish and the Christian commentators and theologians. In this undertaking he had not only his unusually wide knowledge of Hebrew literature to fall back upon (he quotes Rashi, R. Abraham ibn Esra, Maimonides, R. Moses b. Nachman, Joseph Kimchi, R. Asher, R. Solomon ibn Adret, R. Jacob, author of the *Twrim*, R. Nissim of Barcelona, and the views of the Cabalists), but he also had a certain acquaintance with the classical Latin and Christian texts. R. Moses performed his task with a goodly measure of impartiality, and usually refrained from expressing his personal views. He seems at times to have preferred Christian to Jewish commentators, but on the whole was inclined to accept the views of the Jewish scholars.

Various passages in the commentary and in particular of the letters of R. Moses Arragel reveal his self-esteem and his pride in his people. He averred that the Spanish kings in the past had greatly esteemed the Jews of their country for their virtues and fine qualities. The Spanish Jews had always excelled all other Jewish communities “in lineage, wealth, virtues and learning, and it was common knowledge among the kings of Spain that the commentaries on the Torah and the laws and judgments and the other disciplines which we Jews possess today were all, or nearly all, written by Jewish scholars in Castile; and their teachings were accepted by the Jews of the whole Diaspora.” But these same Castilian Jews,

who only a short time before had been “a crown and a diadem to the whole Jewish Diaspora, with their exalted lineage, wealth, wisdom and freedom,” had fallen on evil days because of the persecution to which they were subjected when the king was in his minority, and now they were sunk deep in the depths of poverty and affliction. R. Moses was, of course, unable to refrain from expressing sentiments of subservience to Don Luis de Guzman and the Franciscan scholars of Toledo, whose library was open to all. The excellent illustrations in the book emphasize the high social status of the Jewish scholar, who is portrayed side by side with the Christians in his typically Jewish garb with the Jewish badge of discrimination. This book merits close study for a variety of reasons. In any case, it contains evidence that religious and cultural toleration had not ceased in Spain even after the events of 1391 and 1412.⁸

AVERROISM AMONG THE JEWS

There exist no adequate sources on which to base a detailed account of Jewish efforts to achieve material and spiritual rehabilitation in the first half of the fifteenth century. It is clear, however, that no attempts were made to improve fundamentally either the political status of Jewry in general or of the Spanish Jews in particular, or to raise the level of moral, religious and social life. It would appear that the Jews of Spain learned nothing from experience and even came close to forgetting what they had witnessed with their own eyes. Most of them lived a life of piety and poverty which restricted their horizons and aspirations, while many of those Jews who did attain to wealth and political power held aloof from their brethren and from the traditional religious and popular institutions. Beginning with the middle of the fifteenth century, we hear new complaints about the undermining effects of philosophical study and Averroism upon religion and morality. In his book *Magen va-Romach* (The

Shield and the Spear), Rabbi Hayyim ibn Musa attacked the philosophically inclined preachers “who have seduced Israel from time immemorial.”

In the days of my youth [he writes], I heard a certain preacher who preached on the unity of God by way of inquiry after the manner of the philosophers, and he said many times: “And if He is not One, it must be thus and so.” Thereupon a certain householder, a God-fearing man, arose and said: “Everything I had was robbed from me during the rioting in Seville, and I was beaten and wounded and left for dead by my smiters; and all this I endured for the faith of ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.’ And now you take the tradition of our fathers and examine it in the light of philosophical inquiry, saying: ‘If He is not One, it must be thus and so.’ And the householder said: ‘I prefer the tradition of our fathers and I do not care to listen to this preaching.’ Then he left the synagogue and most of the congregation went with him . . .”⁹

Complaints about religious Averroism were as frequent in the fifteenth century as they had been previously. By way of example we shall cite several passages from the sermons of R. Isaac ‘Arama, the author of the *‘Aqedat Yitzhak* and *Hazut Qashah*, who was a member of the last generation before the Expulsion and preached in various communities—at first in Zamora, in western Castile, and later in the small communities of Catalonia (Tarragona, Berga) until he finally settled, in the 1480’s, in Calatayud in Aragon. In these sermons, familiar Averroist doctrines once again come under attack; the Averroists put forth “bundles of arguments . . . and spread the gall of heresy throughout the world.” These inquiries, R. Isaac writes, lead men to doubt, and from doubts

no man can be saved, for it [the doubt] is near to him, and he gropes for it within himself as a blind man gropes and is afraid to investigate or discuss the matter with

others in his company, lest the flame shoot forth and find a bed of thorns, and the scab of doubt spread and become the malady of despair and the leprosy of heresy and disobedience.

The Averroists claimed that the soul was “a hylic (material) form that ceases to exist with the loss of its subject,” and that “opinions and beliefs are natural and necessary.”¹⁰ Among intellectuals, it was common practice to compare the laws of the Torah to natural morality and natural law, and to end by preferring the latter to the traditional religious commandments. Aristotle’s *Ethics* they asserted, was sufficient. This accounts for R. Isaac’s clear determination to support his explanations with passages from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, not only because this was the prevailing custom, but in order to demonstrate that whatever seemed new in Aristotle could be found in a more perfect form in the Bible.¹¹

It was, according to R. Isaac, the claim of the Averroist intellectuals that “good intentions are all that matter and everything else is vain and worthless.” Commenting on the verse “Does not wisdom call, does not understanding raise her voice” (Prov. 8.1), R. Isaac writes:

Wisdom to these men and their followers is the wisdom plain and simple; so that if you were to approach one of them who had barely even heard of Porphyry’s *Eisagoge* and inquire of him, “What is it that you are studying, the Bible, or the Mishnah, or the Talmud?”—he would answer: “I concern myself with none of these things, but with wisdom alone.” And all this breeds vulgarity and pride, as does their interpretation of “does not understanding raise her voice,” for by understanding they mean political philosophy.

For the men advocating this wisdom have stepped forward and prepared seductive words for thoughtless students and brainless children, saying to them, “Why do you study the laws of ritual slaughtering with Abaye

and Rava; come with us and learn the marvellous wisdom of Aristotle and his disciples and commentators!" Blast the souls of these braggarts, who say that in the [talmudic] tractate *Nezikin* our blessed rabbis were dealing only with secular and transitory matters! If they were wiser they would know better; let them put hand to mouth and thank the Lord for His kindness . . . He who has no share in the juridical *Halakhah*, has no share in the Torah [R. Isaac insisted, citing the talmudic dictum (*Baba Kama*, 30a): "Whoever wishes to be righteous, let him observe all that is written in the tractate *Nezikin*."] ¹²

The Averroist intellectuals explained Jewish history by the laws of astrology,

so that in their pride they make many calculations concerning the miraculous events which caused all the nations to marvel at us, such as the exodus from Egypt, the downfall of Pharaoh, the divine giving of the Torah, the conquest of the Holy Land, the Kingdom of Israel, the building and destruction of the Temple—all these they refer to the heavenly constellations, their conjunctions and predictable positions, as is to be found in some of their books. (These intellectuals) have been a sinful obstacle in the way of our Redemption, for those who have been enticed by them into believing that all is the product, not of good deeds or Divine Providence, but of fate, have ceased to practice the repentance which leads to Redemption; rather they fix their eyes on the heavens and wait upon the constellations great and small, for from them they expect Redemption to proceed; and all this is in addition to their lack of understanding and paucity of faith in the Torah and its commandments.¹³

Indeed, in his book *Hazut Qashah*, R. Isaac concluded

that, in truth, the men of Edom and Ishmael are more consistent than the traitorous sons of Judah, for they,

though they were the last to receive their religion, have chosen the path of faith and sacrificed not a single iota to the claims of philosophy, particularly the Christians, who have made use of their writings and arguments to set philosophy at nought, albeit they had among them excellent and superb philosophers; whereas our philosophers . . . were raised in its [faith's] lap . . . and had no share in analytic philosophy . . . until they turned about and developed a love for it [the philosophy].

R. Isaac 'Arama accused such persons of compromising the Torah, inasmuch as they held that

what is written in the Scriptures and all that is implied there, is not literally true, but is rather an allegory meant for the masses of men, who are unable to comprehend the truths of philosophy; but only that which conforms to philosophy, whether in its literal sense or in the light of either temperate or intemperate interpretations, is to be regarded as true. And this belief of theirs seems to me to be truly remarkable, for if it is indeed correct, then the holy Torah would serve no purpose at all, and Israel would undoubtedly have been better off without it, whether interpreted literally or any other way.

Of the exegetical methods of these “compromisers” he wrote: “Even when they remain unflinchingly loyal to the Torah, their interpretation of the commandments is always lax rather than strict.” The light of faith, R. Isaac stated, would long ago have spread from Israel to the entire world,

were it not for these compromising scholars of ours . . . and their unstinting efforts . . . to convert the Word of the living God into philosophical constructs . . . until the entire Torah is turned into a niggardly, defective philosophy, and we are become the laughing stock of all tongues and nations, for they have clung more perfectly to the Word of God than we, and have believed in the

Creation of the world, etc.; but we in our sinfulness are deprived of these things, for the men that I speak of have perversely banished all faith from our land and have torn it up, trunk and roots, from among our people . . . And how can we hope for redemption from the Gentiles if we become more remote [from the Divine] every day while they come closer; had it not been for God's unending grace, we would have perished. Upon such grace do we rely, as well as upon the poor people and upon the school children who have not sinned. Of them the prophet says [Isa. 66.2], "But this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." ¹⁴

In the fifteenth century, as in previous ages, religious Averroism existed as a historical force undermining the foundations of Jewish national and religious unity. In the period under discussion, however, the danger was all the greater because of the presence of the *conversos*. As will appear, zealous Christians conducted a much harsher campaign against free-thinking *conversos* than the pious among the Jews did in regard to those intellectuals who only paid lip-service to Judaism. R. Isaac 'Arama showed his awareness of this social factor when he remarked that Jewish and *converso* intellectuals did not differ from one another; both agreed with the Christian view that the historical Election of Israel no longer had any validity. "The length and depth of our Exile" had led the freethinkers to disbelieve in the Election of their people, and this disbelief was in itself a cause of the Exile's prolongation.

And these men [the Jewish intellectuals] followed them [the Christians] in thinking—as did the others who departed [i.e., the *anussim*—that the Torah had lost its taste and fragrance and ceased to yield its strength. They interpreted the Torah not at all in the way of tradition. God forgive me for thinking that they would will-

ingly deny the entire tradition, except that they may consider that, if there was no truth in the religion of Israel, there was even less in the Christian religion; also that the Christians would never allow such complete religious infidelity and that the land would tolerate neither their views nor their sayings.¹⁵

These men, in other words, although they did not really believe in the Torah, nevertheless thought it inadvisable to do as the *conversos*; for if Judaism was inconsistent with the religion of reason, Christianity was even more so. As long as they were ostensibly Jews they could hold their Averroist opinions unmolested; this would not have been the case had they embraced Christianity.

ABRAHAM BIENVENISTE AND COMMUNAL REORGANIZATION IN CASTILE

In such an age there was available only one method of internal reform, and this was to strengthen the hand of religion by means of the accepted traditions and by reviving the public institutions that had belonged to Spanish Jewry prior to the persecutions. In this respect much was accomplished by Don Abraham Bienveniste, agent of John II and chief rabbi (*Rab de la Corte*) of Castile by government appointment.¹⁶ Solomon ibn Verga perpetuated Don Abraham's memory in his book. There, in a fictional conversation between the king and some prominent Jews, the former reproves the latter for their pride and for wearing the garments of free men. To this "the aged Bienveniste" replies: "Hast thou ever, O king, seen me, thy servant, into whose hands all the affairs of Castile are entrusted, wearing silk?" In yet another verbal exchange, a similar reply was given by the communal ambassadors—Don Abraham Bienveniste, Don Joseph Nassi (Don Abraham's partner in government business), and R. Samuel b. Xuxen: "We are the emissaries of thy people and the richest men in our nation. Now none may come to the king's gate

except in costly array, and here we are in cheap black garments!" This would seem to indicate that the distinguished Jewish agent and his associates mingled freely with the courtiers in their modest apparel so as to demonstrate their independence from convention.

Much has been recorded about Don Abraham's scrupulous observance of the Torah and its commandments. Once, when the royal court was in residence in the town of Alcalá, "there were present the revered sage, Don Abraham Bienveniste of blessed memory, rabbi of all the congregations of the Kingdom of Castile, and the great scholars who were in his train." When they were informed that in the town of Ocaña it was regarded as permissible to blow into the sac of an animal's lung in order to determine whether the organ was punctured (in which case it was considered forbidden food), they summoned the ritual slaughterer to Alcalá. "And the rabbi, may he rest in peace, and the scholars were greatly incensed, and they seized him, and he was confined in chains. And it was the rabbi's power to dismiss him and punish him by flogging, but the king's high officials intervened and their plea was granted. And he was released and dismissed with a rebuke." R. Hayyim ibn Musa tells of two young scholars who disputed over allegorical interpretations of the Bible in Don Abraham's presence,

until the rabbi rose to his feet and reproached them severely for quarreling. And he said to the congregation: "My brethren, sons of Abraham, believe ye that when the verse says 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth,' or 'And Jacob rose up from Beersheba,' it is to be taken in its literal sense; and so in all that is in the Torah and in the commentaries and traditions of our rabbis of blessed memory, and not in the shallow remarks of these wranglers."

In 1432 (in the month of Iyyar), Don Abraham who, as already mentioned, had been appointed court rabbi, chief judge and apportioner of the taxes for all the communities

of Castile, convoked the trustees and scholars of the communities “and a few good men who frequent the court of our lord the king” in the city of Valladolid, where the court was in residence at the time. In collaboration with these men, R. Abraham drew up *takkanoth* in regard to certain matters connected with “the worship of the Creator, blessed be He, and the honor of the holy Torah, and the service of the king (whom God save!) and the welfare and advantage of the communities.” These communal statutes are preserved in their entirety in a mixture of Hebrew and Castilian. A good deal could doubtless be learned from them regarding not only the conditions prevailing at the time of their adoption, but also the organization of the Castilian communities in the days of their past glory—especially in the fourteenth century. For the reformers were bent solely on restoring the communities to their former high estate and rebuilding the structure that had been destroyed in 1391.

The first section of the communal statutes deals with instruction in the Torah. All the Jewish communities of the kingdom were required to collect, as “a donation for Talmud Torah,” indirect taxes for each head of cattle slaughtered and every measure of wine sold, and also a certain tax on every wedding, circumcision, and death. Localities with less than ten Jewish families were to send receipts for this purpose to the nearest community to which they paid their taxes as a rule. All these funds were to be turned over to treasurers to hold at the disposal of the court rabbi, and might not be used for any other purpose. But communities already accommodating scholars who offered public instruction were authorized to use some of this money for the needs of their teachers and pupils, leaving only the surplus at the disposal of the chief rabbi. Every community of fifteen families was enjoined to engage a good children’s teacher. In localities with forty or more Jewish families, the communities were to make every possible effort to maintain a teacher of Torah, who would

impart instruction in “Talmud, *halakhoth*, and *haggadoth*.” His salary was to be paid from the meat and wine taxes as from the *hekdesh* (crops from plots of land devoted to the support of scholars, study, etc.), “so that they might have a preacher and instructor in all that concerns the worship of the Creator, blessed be He.” All such scholars shall maintain “permanent *yeshivot* where they could teach all who wished to learn Halakhah from them.” In any place where twenty or more householders lived, they were to buy or rent a house of worship, and to penalize those who did not attend morning and evening services at the synagogue.

The second section of the Valladolid statutes was devoted to the selection of communal judges and other officials. Judges (*dayanim*) were to be chosen in every community who would “consider claims, grievances and complaints, and punish transgressions.” When it was found that some communities had no judges, such communities were to hold general assemblies within ten days after the adoption of the statutes had been proclaimed and to elect judges. Communities already having judges were to hold assemblies every year, ten days before the expiration of their term of office, to choose their successors. All other communal officials (*neëmanim*, treasurers, public administrators, etc.) were to be chosen in the same manner. If agreement on candidates could not be reached, the court rabbi (*Rab de la Corte*) was to be informed to that effect within thirty days, and he would then appoint a judge or other communal official for such communities. The elected judges were to have authority to “impose fines and punish malefactors upon the decision of a scholar and three of the leading men of the community, the most estimable of those acquainted with religion and law who dwell in that place.” But they had to safeguard the authority bestowed by the king upon Don Abraham in regard to the administration of justice and to permit appeals to be made to him from their decisions.

The judges were to appoint a time and place for holding

court three days in every week for the trial of communal cases. They were authorized to compel defendants to appear before them, and to impose fines upon those who refused to do so. In order to abolish certain wrong usages obtaining at trials, the framers of the statutes laid down the rule, patterned after the laws of the kingdom, that no person was to be permitted to bring written charges to a court without prior permission from the judges, and that the charges must be preferred in a proper manner, without insults or derogatory remarks against any person whatsoever. Such charges had to be signed by the person who made them and confirmed by an oath. One statute provided that no one was entitled to act as a pleader to a party to a suit except upon a verbal or written order from the judge. If a "student" violated this statute, he would forfeit his "grant" from the Talmud Torah; and if it was someone who did not receive a grant, that person was to be penalized in some other way. Anyone who brought false charges was to be branded as "one that deviseth evil." It was the duty of the communal scribe to draw up within three days, on behalf of anyone who requested him to do so, charges against a judge or one of the parties to a trial. Judges were forbidden to order the arrest of a Jew or Jewess except upon a written warrant giving the reasons for such an arrest, and signed in the presence of witnesses and bearing their signature. If any person received a written order from the court rabbi in a matter of litigation and did not present it within fifty days to the opposing party in the presence of witnesses, he was not thereafter entitled to make use of it.

Special provision was made for dealing with cases of denunciation and slander, to which the third section of the Valladolid statutes was devoted. The framers of the statutes began by explaining why it was necessary to re-enact the old regulation on this subject:

Since it is the desire and the merciful will of our king, long may he reign, that civil and criminal cases shall be

tried under the laws of the Jews, and since he commanded in his charter of privileges that the honorable Rabbi Don Abraham (whom God save!) shall try such cases, he and the judges whom he may appoint in his stead, great benefits will accrue to the communities from this: first, the Jews will thereby observe their Torah; second, they will relieve themselves of the many costs and losses which they incur when they go to the Gentile courts; third, they will benefit because the Gentile judges—though they are very learned and upright men—are not familiar enough with our laws and judgments to be experts and authorities on these matters; and fourth, because the lords, judges and *alcaldes* are thereby put to much trouble; and the communities of Castile have at all times had statutes and regulations in the matters in question. Moreover, since our Lord the king (whom God save!) has commanded, in the above-mentioned privilege scroll, his judges and magistrates not to interfere in litigation between one Jew and another . . .”

This introduction is followed by the text of the statutes themselves: One Jew was not to be permitted to summon another before a secular or ecclesiastical judge “outside our Torah,” “even if that judge is authorized to try cases under the Jewish law, except in regard to taxes due to the king, queen, church, or lord of the locality.” Only if the defendant was a violent man who did not recognize the jurisdiction of a Jewish court, could the judges and the local scholar permit the plaintiff to summon him to appear before a Gentile court. Detailed provisions for the punishment of informers follow at this point. Any Jew who denounced another Jew in such a way that harm would be caused him if the matter were known to Christians—even if no Christian were present at the time and no one was injured—was to pay one hundred *solidos* for each offense and go to prison for ten days. But if a Jew’s action caused harm to another Jew, he had to bear

all the costs over and above the penalty and fine mentioned in the foregoing clause. A Jew who denounced another Jew in the presence of Christians was to pay a fine of two hundred *solidos* and go to prison for twenty days. In the event that the injury was of a financial nature, the informer was to pay the amount involved and be excommunicated for ten days; and if the injury were physical, the informer was to be punished according to the advice of a Jewish scholar. If a Jew handed over the person or the money of a Jew or a Jewess to a Christian man or woman and the matter was revealed, not by witnesses, but through circumstantial evidence, local judges, “upon the advice of a scholar,” were to order his arrest, and his punishment was to be imposed in conformity with the advice of the greatest scholars who could be reached. If the guilt of the informer were attested by a single witness or through circumstantial evidence, or by his own confession, he was to be branded on the forehead with a hot iron and stigmatized as an informer by sentence of a court composed of the great scholars mentioned in the foregoing clause. If his one-time guilt were jointly attested to by two trustworthy witnesses, he was to be sentenced by the scholar, judges and notables of the locality to one hundred strokes of the lash and to banishment from the site of his crime. If an informer were thrice found guilty on the evidence of two trustworthy witnesses, the court rabbi was to order his execution, under the Jewish laws, by one of the king’s judges. If, however, it was not possible to execute, brand, or smite the man because he would not accept punishment, he was to be proclaimed an informer and slanderer everywhere, so that, so long as he refused to accept the penalty defined in the statutes, he would be avoided by all Jews, “and he shall be known in Israel as a man of blood and a son of Belial,” so that no one would intermarry with his family and he would not be entitled to any Jewish sacrament as long as he did not submit to judgement according to the *takkanoth*. But—

if anyone would tell the king (whom God save!) or the lords of his council a thing to his [the king's] advantage and for his well-being—even if the information was directed against a Jew—that man shall not be stigmatized as an informer or slanderer, since all Jews are in duty bound to seek the king's welfare and to oppose anyone who works against his welfare and to pursue such a person until he is annihilated.

In connection with the anti-defamation statutes, several additional regulations were enacted against the coercion of individuals and public institutions, such as betrothals and marriages by command of the king and violent nobles, interference by high-handed Christians in the sale of wine in the Jewish quarter, and obtaining communal appointments and posts through the king and other outside parties. “But this statute does not and cannot apply to the honourable Rabbi Don Abraham, since it was and is the desire of all the communities that he act as the chief judge and apportioner of their taxes, and since it was by request of the scholars and at the urging of the communities and their pleas and requests, that he accepted this post of judge and apportioner of taxes.” All other persons who were in possession of “privileges” entitling them to communal appointments at the instance of non-Jewish parties, were called upon to submit them to the Rabbi Don Abraham within six months, so that he might scrutinize them and decide what was to be done. Finally, there was a statute forbidding Jews to employ Christian servants to work or live permanently in their homes, either with or without compensation, “for great evils can and do arise out of this practice; and in olden days, when the Jewish communities enjoyed greater peace and prosperity, such a statute existed.”

The fourth section of the statutes, which dealt with the taxes and “services,” was opened with a grievance: “For our many sins, the informers, extortioners and those who exert

pressure through princes and rulers and other Christians, have been increased in number in such a manner that taxpayers, who are required by law to pay, relieve themselves of this duty and impose it upon others.” Other Jews had settled on the estates of the nobles because they were accorded more liberties there, so that certain localities in the kingdom were losing their population and the number of those paying taxes to the king decreased. Still other Jews obtained “privileges” exempting them from the payment of taxes, or entitling them to grants from the communal funds. In this respect, also, the framers of the statutes renewed for the most part regulations which had been re-enacted in every generation, namely, those forbidding Jews to obtain such “privileges” by any device whatsoever, and calling upon all in possession of “privileges” to submit them within six months to the court rabbi for his decision.

The statutes in question did not impair the special rights of the widow of the Rabbi Don Meir Alguadex, of blessed memory, the former chief judge of the Castilian communities, and of his daughter, the widow of the Honorable Don Meir aben Alfacar, may he rest in peace, because the sage Rabbi Don Meir Alguadex of blessed memory accomplished much good in Israel and stood in the breach for many years; and it therefore behooves us to be grateful to him and to keep faith and to remember the covenant and the good deeds he performed in his lifetime for the communities . . .

A community that found the taxes and “services” levied upon it too burdensome was entitled to send representatives to the court rabbi to lay its claims before him. The court rabbi was to examine these claims in collaboration with two scholars of his own choice and then to render his decision. Since it had been the practice of communities to impose taxes arbitrarily upon individuals, regardless of justice or fairness,

the statutes provided that the members of the communities were to assemble and rescind the old arbitrary regulations in this respect, and arrange the matter according to the decision of the local scholar, if there was one; and if there was not, of the scholar in the nearest town. Thenceforth the communities were to permit all individuals to appeal to the judge of their city, or of another town in the district, or to the court rabbi, against assessments of taxes. Members of certain communities who claimed special privileges in the matter of tax exemptions were called upon to show such “privileges” to the court rabbi within six months. The statutes also eased the tax burdens of widows and orphans.

The framers of the statutes required each and every community to adopt statutes of its own and to levy indirect taxes on meat and wine, since these taxes were necessary for the maintenance of the communities, and by their means “quarrels and strife and false swearing and bans” would be avoided. If no agreement could be reached within thirty days, the differences of opinion were to be submitted to the court rabbi, whose decision would be binding. Each and every community was to impose a ban “with ten curses on the intermediate Sabbath (between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) of every year at the morning prayers, in the presence of the worshipers, when the Scroll of the Law is in the Ark,” in order that the taxes might not be apportioned under threat of violence. Moreover, the statutes interdict the administrators from calling special meetings—lacking the legal number of attendants—in order to pass a resolution in agreement with their wishes. All statutes which had not been adopted by all or a majority of the members of the community were declared null and void. In localities where public services were held, notice of assemblies was to be given on the preceding Sabbath in the synagogue, so that all members might be able to attend or to stay away if they did not choose to avail themselves of their rights. The assembly would then be

authorized to take decisions, even if no majority were present. In case of emergency, the notice was to be given on a Monday or a Thursday, or on the very day of the assembly, at the morning or evening services, or else by special notification by the scribe of the community, who was to go and inform “most of the householders and tax-payers”—depending upon the urgency of the matter.

The fifth and last section of the statutes laid down restrictions upon extravagance in dress and entertainment—a subject always included in the statutes of medieval communities and municipalities. The purpose of the framers of the statutes was to prevent householders from sinking into debt and from arousing Christian envy and hatred “on account of which new edicts are enacted against us from time to time; and we have not yet quite overcome the effects of such former decrees.”

These, then, were the statutes of Valladolid, which were intended to restore the communal procedures of the Castilian *aljamas* before 1391. In no other medieval community did the central organization reach such a peak of perfection as in Castile. Central organization was not permanent elsewhere; or it was imposed upon the communities by the government. The central Jewish organizations in the Middle Ages did not have strong and ramified structures like the provincial committees in Poland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Generally speaking, the communities in Castile too, were autonomous; only the court rabbi was authorized to intervene in any and all of their concerns and to render decisions, even contrary to their wishes. The statutes of Valladolid reflect signs of the times. Now all the communities were small. There were no longer leading communities that imposed their authority upon neighboring localities. Nor is there any trace of real class antagonism in the Jewish communities. Some of these statutes were nothing but vestiges from the days of ascent and growth. The various clauses

dealing with the laws against denunciation are especially surprising. From these it may be judged that all the rights the Jews had enjoyed in this respect prior to their revocation by the laws of 1380–1412 had been restored to them. Nevertheless, it may be doubted that the aljamas ever enforced these laws in the course of the fifteenth century. No mention of their enforcement can be found either in the archives or in the vast body of antisemitic literature, which would not have passed such matters over in silence. But the fact is, that Don Abraham Bienveniste erected a structure that stood Castilian Jewry in good stead until the year of the Expulsion, and that there were leaders and scholars who watched over it well.

In 1450, after Bienveniste's death, mention is found of a committee for apportioning taxes among the Jews of the kingdom. This committee was composed of R. Joseph ibn Shemtob, the well-known philosopher; Joseph Bienveniste, son of Don Abraham; R. Isaac Canpanton, the last "Gaon of Castile"; and two other rich Jews of distinguished ancestry. In the reign of Henry IV, Maestre Shemaya, the king's physician, is referred to as the rabbi, chief judge and apportioner of the taxes for all the aljamas. He was succeeded by R. Jacob ibn Nuñez; and the last chief rabbi of Castilian Jewry, Don Abraham Seneor, was accustomed to convene the trustees of the aljamas almost every year.¹⁷

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS THE CONVERSOS

The *converso* problem, to which reference was made earlier in this chapter, had its effect upon the Jewish question in fifteenth-century Spain. The situation of the Jews was complicated by the presence of the neo-Christians or *conversos*, as they were generally called by the Christians. The Jews characterized them as *anussim* or *meshummadim*. (The word *marrano*—"swine"—was a term of opprobrium and never used in official parlance or polite literature.) In himself, the

converso was not a novel phenomenon. Socio-religious groupings of converts who had forsaken Judaism under compulsion and had not wholeheartedly embraced their new religion were to be found—particularly in southern Europe—at all times and places in the Middle Ages. But the *conversos* were nowhere so numerous as in Spain after 1391. There they constituted so grave a socio-religious phenomenon that no political regime, however moderate or extreme, could afford to ignore its latent dangers. But only in the middle of the fifteenth century did all aspects of the problems inherent in this phenomenon become generally recognized. Up to that time the *conversos* had been allowed to make their own adjustments to their new religious duties.

The conversionist trend did not cease when persecution stopped. In the *aljama* of Gerona there was a *hekdesh* (communal trust fund), of which R. Hasdai Crescas had at one time been an administrator. In the year 1431, when the last Jewish warden of the *hekdesh* was converted to Christianity, Alfonso V decided that the apostate should remain at his post and dispense charity to both the Christian and the Jewish poor—but chiefly to the Christians. The king explained his decision on the ground that so many Jews had been converted and so few were left that it was hardly possible to speak of a Jewish community. In 1443, Tolosana, widow of the distinguished Don Benvenist de la Cavalleria, bequeathed, for the salvation of her and her husband's souls, a free-loan fund which was to be administered by her nearest of kin in the de la Cavalleria family, or by another of her relatives in case no one by that name still remained a Jew. Furthermore,

If the Jewish community of Saragossa has been destroyed or for any reason depopulated, or changed its religion and status in such a manner that the *hekdesh*, which is intended to assure the salvation of my soul, can no longer function, the income in question shall be placed

at the disposal of the largest Jewish community in the Kingdom of Aragon.

This lady also left certain sums to the fraternity *Qabbarim* (for the burial of the dead), the Talmud Torah, Bikur Holim Society, and other charities, and to her two Christian sons (Gonzalo and Juan), her three Christian daughters and her two Jewish daughters. These legacies were all exceedingly modest. The widow of the richest Jew in Aragon seems to have lost her fortune, while her two Christian sons became wealthy and influential.¹⁸ In 1404, the widow of a certain Samuel Hasdai Halevi of the village of Santa Coloma de Queralt bequeathed a sum of money to help provide dowries for Jewish girls and support the synagogue, “and also to my two brothers, who are reputed to be Christians. I do not know their names, but before their baptism they were known as Judah Adret and Samuel Adret.” The widow of one Solomon Shalom of Gerona expressed the desire in her will (1470) that “Margarita, my Christian daughter, and my Jewish son and heir, Vidal de Piera, shall deal with one another in seemly fashion and shall live in peace and unity and love.”¹⁹

The tide of conversions rose higher and higher during the decades immediately following the cataclysm of 1391, and then seems to have ebbed somewhat until the Expulsion decree again propelled multitudes towards the baptismal font. As time passed there was, however, a reaction in the ranks of the new Christians. Not only did actual converts (*anussim*) try with all their might to live as Jews, but even the children and the grandchildren of apostates who had forsaken Judaism of their own free will and choice were now inclined to retrace their steps. The *conversos* secretly visited their Jewish brethren in order to join them in celebrating the Jewish festivals, attended the synagogues, listened to sermons, and discussed points of religion. They did no work on the Sabbath, observed the laws of mourning and the dietary

laws, and fasted on Yom Kippur and even women observed the Fast of Esther. They had Jewish prayer books and engaged their own Hebrew teachers and ritual slaughterers. They sent oil to the synagogue for the lamps and were provided by their Jewish brethren with literature that lent them courage to hope for consolation and redemption in days to come. Even such as did not wish to return to Judaism were known as bad Christians, Averroists, and unbelievers. Such phenomena were to be found among all classes.

Conversions and racial-religious intermixtures were common in all Jewish families. And yet the difference was apparent between districts where converts assimilated quickly with the old Christians and districts where the *conversos* maintained close connections with Judaism, either because they were living in densely populated communities of their own or because they were settled near Jewish communities. In Andalusia, Toledo, Saragossa and adjacent areas in particular, many *conversos* were considered Jews. In some towns they remained in the separate Jewish quarters. Apart from their religious inclinations, the *conversos* were marked by the peculiar social and ethnic qualities that the tribulations of the diaspora stamped upon them. The lower-class *con-versos* supported themselves by minor handicrafts, shop-keeping, and petty trade—pursuits looked down upon by the educated Spaniards even in those days. It hardly needs to be said that the converts did not assimilate with the Christian peasants. Some *conversos* continued to lend money at interest and to farm taxes. They exercised important functions in the financial administration of the State and other government departments, and held high posts which were not open to Jews in the municipalities and in the Council of State. Here their knowledge of jurisprudence, which came easily to them after their training in the talmudic dialectics, stood them in good stead. Some *conversos* soon learned the humanistic disciplines with which they had been unfamiliar while they were

Jews, and resembled the educated members of the upper-class Christian bourgeoisie. From *converso* circles came Christian clerics like those of the Sancta Maria family, great theologians, diplomats, and leaders in the European civilization of their day.

No man dared to impugn the Christian zeal of such outstanding individuals, but the great majority of *conversos*—in all their categories and sub-categories—were suspected and hated by the Christians. The latter knew that most of the *conversos* had embraced Christianity under duress and that they continued to believe and practice as Jews to the best of their knowledge and ability. The Christians also knew that cultured *conversos* of the upper class yearned for their old friends and kindred, for their people and the tradition of their ancestors. Such *conversos* were intensely hated by the Christians when it became apparent that they had not adopted any religion at all and were merely philosophical intellectuals, Averroists, and nihilists, whose whole faith was summed up in the slogan then current: “to be born and die; all the rest is a snare and a delusion.” Christian extremists decried the Averroists among the *conversos*, just as pious Jews criticized those of this type who still remained within the narrow confines of the Jewish quarter. Men of this socioreligious type, who were associated with Spanish Jewry in all periods of its history, were not essentially changed by their conversion to Christianity. The Jewish courtiers, who had always held themselves aloof from the Jewish masses and their religious traditions, did not change in any significant way after having embraced Christianity under compulsion or for some other reason. In the eyes of such intellectuals, Christianity was even more inconsistent with the religion of reason than the Law of Moses. In no other country—not even in Italy—were Averroists so much in evidence as in Spain.²⁰

Men of this type now added a special nuance to life at the

royal courts. Side by side with the Jewish bankers and physicians in their modest Jewish garb appeared *conversos*, in the magnificent array of courtiers and knights, who were preoccupied with developments in the great world of politics. Both types had the same characteristics, except that the converts were more skilled in humanistic rhetoric and had forgotten their childhood education. Influential *converso* statesmen patronized poets, themselves *conversos*, who strove to compete with the leading troubadours of the age. Lyric poetry from the period reveals, as it did in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a type of Jewish courtier who had become either a *converso* or an open apostate. The Christian poets at the court of John II of Castile enjoyed expressing contempt for their converted fellow poets, and there were even those of Jewish extraction who derided their ancestral stock.

There is, for example, a verse lampoon of Alfonso Fernandez Samuel (Samuel b. Altaraz?) which goes: "All must admit that no *mesumad* (apostate) like him was ever born; and I doubt whether one ever will be." Alfonso had been baptized when he was past forty, and was now over sixty years old. A lifetime of submission to blows and buffets had earned him a fortune. In his will he bequeathed only a pittance to the Church, but left one-hundred gold pieces to some Jews so that they might not need to work on the Sabbath. He requested that when laid out in his coffin, the cross should be placed at his feet, the Koran at his breast, and the Torah, "his life and light," at his head. He willed his hat to the *samas* (beadle) so that the latter might study the Torah and chant a *pismon* (hymn) for his soul; his donkey, knapsack and silk bonnet he bequeathed to the grave-diggers, so that they would not drag his body with ropes, as was commonly done to heretics. To a Jew named Jacob Cidaryo, his executor, he left his kerchief as a token of "charity," provided that he would recite a *tefila* (prayer) for his soul after his inter-

ment.²¹ This is one of the first portraits of a *converso* in the court circles of John II. Many other examples could be given. In discussing the reign of Henry IV we shall have more to say about *conversos* who were involved in epoch-making developments.

An interesting personality among the first-generation converts was Pedro de la Cavalleria,²² a member of the famous Saragossa family. Pedro was baptized with his father and the rest of his family during the Tortosa Disputation. He was a famous authority on jurisprudence. In the acts of the middle 1430's, Pedro was named *legum doctor, advocatus curie domini regis, magister rationalis curie in regno Aragonum*. He was killed in 1461, during the early stages of the revolt in Catalonia against John II of Aragon while engaged in the performance of his political duties. In 1447 he took great pains to prepare evidence, which was signed by Christian notables, to prove that he came of pure Christian parentage and ancestry. The document drawn up by a notary in which this statement is witnessed was prepared most cunningly, as it was impossible in so many words to deny that his father, Fernando, had been born and brought up as a Jew—a fact still remembered in Saragossa some thirty years after their conversion. In 1450 Pedro de la Cavalleria himself wrote an apologia for Christianity under the title of *Zelus Christi contra Judaeos, Saracenos et infideles*, in which he displayed a much wider knowledge of Hebrew literature than a Christian son of a Christian father would have been likely to possess. Thus, he quoted passages from the works of the cabalist R. Joseph Chicatilla, which had not been previously cited in polemical literature. He seems to have been able to read Jewish books.

Concerning this man, his wife and his children, evidence of a very curious nature was given at a trial of the Inquisition in the years 1485–1492. A Jewish weaver then testified that at the time of the plague, when Pedro had fled with his

family from Saragossa to a village in Aragon, he had often visited him (the weaver) in his home, and particularly enjoyed the Sabbath repast, with wine and *hamin* (the warm Sabbath food) and other Jewish delicacies. He had given the responses when grace was recited at meals, spoken Hebrew to his host, and discussed religious matters with him. Finally, the host had cried out wonderingly: "Sir, why, being so learned in the Torah, didst thou hasten to embrace Christianity?" To this Pedro had replied:

Silence, fool! Could I, as a Jew, ever have risen higher than a rabbinical post? But now, see, I am one of the chief councillors (*jurado*) of the city. For the sake of the little man who was hanged (Jesus), I am accorded every honor, and I issue orders and decrees to the whole city of Saragossa. Who hinders me—if I choose—from fasting on Yom Kippur and keeping your festivals and all the rest? When I was a Jew I dared not walk as far as this (i.e., beyond the prescribed limits of a Sabbath day's walk); but now I do as I please.

When the simple artisan continued to press him, Pedro replied: "So it was formerly. Now I am free to do as I please." Testimony so detailed can hardly be doubted. Even assuming that the evidence concerning the individual in question was not true, the fact remains that we have here a "free" and converted Jew of a type with which both Christians and Jews were familiar.

THE "ANTISEMITIC" MOVEMENT AGAINST CONVERSOS.

THE DISTURBANCES OF 1449

During the period of religious laxity and moral deterioration at the royal courts of Castile and Aragon in the first half of the fifteenth century, *conversos* of all types could live as they chose without hindrance. There was no organized Inquisition of any kind in Castile, and the inquisitors of Aragon seem not to have been over-zealous in the perform-

ance of their duties. It was only in the late 1440's that the *converso* problem was revealed in all its gravity; and then it suddenly became a political and religious factor of the first magnitude. The foundations of society in Castile had been undermined in the reign of John II and during the period when the great courtier Don Alvaro de Luna was influential, owing to the mutiny of the nobles and to the friction between the nobles and courtiers, on the one hand, and the Estates and families of the municipal leaders on the other. Such phenomena were common in most European countries at the time. In Castile there was the additional factor of tension between the old and the new Christians. Most of the cities were split into two camps by racial strife, which intriguers in high political circles exploited for their own purposes. Finally, there was an outbreak of actual war between the old and the new Christians, which continued without intermission for about twenty-five years until the "Catholic Monarchs" restored order in the political situation. Though contemporary Christian historians were in the habit of making only the briefest of references to the Jews, they were unable, when treating of the internal situation in Castile, to ignore entirely the role played by former Jews in the political conflict; but they did their best to obscure the burning religious question which was connected with the social ferment. As is known, the Jewish historians of the period did not write history in our modern sense, and they were not inclined to touch upon the *converso* problem, which was dangerous for a variety of reasons. The modern Jewish historian, however, has the duty of dealing with the problem in all its aspects. The story of the *conversos* is not one of racial "remnants" which had lost their Jewish characteristics, but of a large population-group, the majority of whose members adhered, consciously and by conviction, to the living Jewish tradition. The old Christians who fought the *conversos* were impelled by religious fanaticism, for they considered the latter to be aliens

whom circumstances labelled Christians, but who, in the main, were Jews by race and religion, or were attached to Jewry by personal and spiritual ties even if they did not believe in any positive religion.

The first racial conflict broke out in 1449 in the city of Toledo.²³ The lower classes of Toledo were first incited by an unknown craftsman, and then the leadership was taken over by a man of good family, Pedro Sarmiento, commander of the town's *alcazar* by royal appointment. The incidental cause of the revolt was a heavy tax levied by Alvaro de Luna on the king's behalf. The rebels began by setting fire to the home of a prominent *converso* tax-farmer by the name of Alonso Cota. Sarmiento took over all the powers of the municipal administration, ordered the arrest of several leading new Christians, and sentenced them to be burnt at the stake after a religio-judicial inquiry and trial during which they were tortured into confessing that they had lived as Jews. Sarmiento then promulgated an edict against the *conversos* in general, in which they were accused of untrustworthiness in matters of religion. They had, for example, kept the precepts of the Mosaic Law and referred to Jesus of Nazareth as a hanged Jew whom the Christians worshipped as a divinity. On Good Friday, the edict alleged, when the anointing oil was consecrated in the churches, and the body of the Redeemer was held up on the altar, the *conversos* slaughtered lambs and offered up sacrifices (apparently an allusion to the *seder* night on the eve of the Passover) and were judaizing—as had been shown in a trial held by the clergy of the church of Toledo. Several *conversos* had been therefore condemned to death by fire. It has been proven that they were enemies of the city and of its Christian inhabitants. It had been at their suggestion and by their persuasions, the edict asserted, that Don Alvaro de Luna declared open war upon the city; they were thus following in the footsteps of their Jewish ancestors, who in the days of the Visigoths had delivered up the city to the

Moslems. By stratagems and cunning they had taken enormous sums from the royal revenues, impoverished nobles and knights and old Christian notables, and plundered their families and goods in the city of Toledo and throughout the kingdom. When they controlled all the municipal offices and powers—according to Sarmiento's allegations—most of the localities affiliated with the city had been ruined and depopulated, the municipal estates had been sold to strangers, and the municipal revenues spent on interest and on their private needs. Finally the *conversos* had rebelled, armed themselves and gone into action with the object of annihilating the old Christians and their leader, Sarmiento, and of handing over the city to its enemies. Sarmiento accordingly proclaimed all *conversos* of Jewish descent to be unfit for any public office whose occupant exercised authority over old Christians in the city and the district. *Conversos* were also branded as unfit to act as notaries and witnesses. Similar developments took place at the same time in the city of Ciudad Real.

Apart from Sarmiento's edict, other documents are extant which illumine the religious and social background of the civil war. One such document contains a keen satire on the converted Jews, a parody of royal privileges ostensibly conferred upon a knight of pure Christian descent, granting him the right to live and comport himself like the "*marranos*" and to avail himself of all their cunning devices. The knight was accordingly authorized to serve the rulers of his country in the capacity of an agent and adviser, and by his wicked counsel to lead them into the paths of licentiousness, lust and oppression of their poor subjects, and to derive from all this the utmost possible advantages for himself. He was entitled—so the parody went on—to charge interest on loans, to keep the Jewish laws, to intermarry with members of the Jewish race, to hold their opinions, and to believe not in the Catholic faith but solely in birth and death. He was permitted to work on Sunday and to keep the Sabbath, to make his home tidy and

prepare his food on the eve of the Sabbath, and to light the Sabbath candles. The *marranos* had to admit him to their assemblies and to their society. He was eligible for any post as a municipal judge and councillor or as a municipal notary so as to be able to enjoy the municipal revenues, and to swindle old Christians and set them to murdering one another. He was also free to become a priest for the purpose of listening to the confessions of old Christians and to pry into their secrets. He and his posterity were permitted to become physicians and surgeons so as to kill old Christians, take away their wives, defile their pure blood, and occupy their posts. Permission was granted such privileged persons, moreover, to study the “Hebrew wisdom,” to bury their dead according to Jewish practice, to observe the Jewish laws of mourning, to celebrate the Jewish festivals, and to drink the wine of the “benediction.” When they attended a Christian church, they were to carry tax-farming registers in place of prayer books, as many of the *marranos* were in the habit of doing. It was forbidden to summon them to duels, as this would be incompatible with *marrano* custom. It was permitted them to practice immersion and circumcision according to the Jewish ritual, and to be called by Jewish names in private and Christian names in public so as to deceive the people. And because King John II was informed—so the parody of the privilege winds up—that Pedro Sarmiento was the enemy of the *marranos*, the holder of this privilege and his associates were not to be subject to Sarmiento’s legal jurisdiction.²⁴ This satire is an important and interesting source-document for the history of antisemitism, particularly because in it we find for the first time the favorite racial adage: that the pure blood of Spanish Christians was defiled when mixed with that of persons of the Jewish race. The age had learned from experience that a man’s characteristics and beliefs were not changed by baptism, despite its “ineffaceable nature.”

The revolt of 1449 was definitely religious in character.

In Sarmiento's order we hear for the first time of inquisitorial proceedings in Castile against *conversos* which were conducted by ordinary priests of the church in Toledo. The outcome of the trial is recorded in a document quoted in *Fortalitium Fidei*, a vast polemical work which will be discussed below. According to this document, the *conversos* were demonstrably faithful to all the laws and beliefs of the Jews and held all those Averroist opinions which were to become a topic of discussion at the inquisitorial trials arranged by Torquemada's deputies. At that time the secular authorities had not yet sanctioned such religious trials. John II issued commands for the suppression of the revolt in Toledo, the pursuit of the fleeing Sarmiento, and revocation of his anti-*converso* decrees. Pope Nicholas V approved the stand of the Castilian government. Nevertheless, two years later, in 1451, the same pope authorized, at the request of John II, the establishment of an Inquisition of bishops for the trial of *conversos* suspected of adhering to Judaism.²⁵ The *conversos*, for their part, followed the practice of their fathers by engaging in apologetics. One edition of the *General Chronicles of Spain*, written at this time, contains letters purporting to have been addressed by the Jews of Toledo in the first century C.E. to their brethren in Jerusalem, warning them against killing Jesus of Nazareth. This was intended to prove that the Spanish Jews had no hand in that affair.²⁶

In 1453 Alvaro de Luna was executed; and in 1454 John II passed away. His son, Henry IV (1454–1474) succeeded him on the throne. The personal and political conduct of this eccentric king aroused the rebellious nobles against him more than against any of his predecessors. The nobles' most serious charge against the king was that he favored the Moslems and the Jews and, more than all others, the *conversos*. One of the most hated courtiers was the king's secretary and auditor of the royal accounts, Don Diego Arias de Avila.²⁷ Diego was a *converso*, but no information is available concern-

ing his attitude towards the religion of his fellow Jews, except that in early life he had been a partner in government transactions with Joseph ibn Shemtob, a loyal defender of Judaism at the royal and princely courts. The enemies of Diego Arias alleged that he had started his career as an itinerant peddler in the villages, where he had ingratiated himself with the peasants by singing Moslem songs for them. He later rose to the rank of tax collector for Don Enrique, son of John II, whose chief financial advisor he eventually became. His enemies described Diego Arias as a contemptible courtier of depraved sexual habits, who sucked the blood of the citizenry and undermined the economic strength of his country. Notwithstanding these evil reports, Diego's son Pedro succeeded to his father's post, and his son Juan became the bishop of Segovia.

ALFONSO DE ESPINA'S FORTALITIUM FIDEI

During the twenty years of the reign of Henry IV, the tension engendered by the Jewish question increased from year to year and the first plans were laid for solving it. In 1460, a Franciscan monk by the name of Alfonso de Espina, confessor to Henry IV, completed a work entitled *Fortalitium Fidei*²⁸ (Fortress of the Faith), which was a storehouse of polemical arguments and weapons for the use of the Church against its enemies: heretics, Jews, Moslems and demons. The main purpose of this author was to combat Judaism and the heresies that had grown out of it. In his introduction, Espina entreates God and beseeches His help in arousing the Spanish people from its torpor: The shepherds of the Church think not to inquire into the ways of the heretics—those ravaging wolves who have entered the Christian fold. The judges of the people are being seduced by the bribes they receive from the cruel Jews who blaspheme God. They also allow the Moslems to live as they please. No man takes up the cudgels for abject Spain, which is situated at land's end,

and doomed to absorb the dregs of the enemies of Christianity.

Espina's information about Judaism was obtained from the works of his predecessors, beginning with Raymond Martini and Abner of Burgos, and ending with Paulus de Sancta Maria and Hieronymus de Sancta Fide. The writer had also had some personal contacts with Jews and *conversos*. Modern historians have repeatedly asserted that the author of *Fortalitium Fidei* was of Jewish descent. But nothing of the kind is mentioned in the sources; nor does the book itself offer any evidence to justify this assumption. It seems that Espina himself could not read Hebrew books, but his hostile eye discerned the theoretical and practical differences between Judaism and Christianity, which he emphasized skillfully by means of distortions and forgeries. Out of the abundant material and scholastic casuistry with which his book is filled, his practical aim emerges very clearly: the establishment of an Inquisition to deal with the *conversos* and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. His voluminous work contains a methodical program, which the Catholic Monarchs themselves were to carry into effect by those very means in the years from 1481 to 1492.

The heretical doctrines against which the author launched his attacks were those held mainly in *converso* circles. To be sure, some of the common views concerning Christian dogmas could just as well have been ascribed to freethinkers and skeptics of all times and places; but in Castile such views seem to have been voiced chiefly by the *conversos*. Some of the arguments, opinions and heresies in question derived from the Jewish descent of those who expressed them. According to Espina, there were people in Spain who practiced circumcision and defended it on the ground that Jesus of Nazareth had also been circumcised, a reason obviously offered in defense of the *conversos'* right to observe Jewish customs. Espina tells how he himself saw *conversos* circum-

cise themselves and their sons, and how they tried to conceal the matter with idle tales. When he preached in Medina del Campo in 1459 against *conversos* whose religious integrity was suspect, there happened to be in the city thirty *conversos* who had just then been circumcised and were hiding in the home of a friend during their convalescence. Espina says that one of these *conversos*, a physician by the name of Magister Franciscus, journeyed to Jerusalem (a statement that happens to be confirmed by the official records, proving that stories of this kind told by Espina may be accepted as true), and that some of the other *conversos* intended to do likewise. In this connection, Espina quotes from the records of the Toledo trial of 1449, in which are found some astonishing data about Jewish beliefs and practices—the practice of circumcision in particular—and about anti-Christian and Averroist views held by *conversos*.

In the year 1459, while Espina was active in Segovia, he learned that the local *conversos* had attended the synagogue on the Succoth festival. In Fromista, in 1459, a barber of *converso* descent declared, following the text of an oath frequently taken by the Spanish Jews at this time, that he believed not in Christ, but solely in the God who created the heavens, the stars, the earth, the sea, and the dust. The barber's statement was reported to the bishop of the diocese of Palencia, who brought it to the attention of Alfonso de Espina. The blasphemer was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment, but as a result of intervention from without the sentence was commuted to ten years' banishment from his native town. It seems strange that Alfonso de Espina should have considered it necessary to explain to his co-religionists and contemporaries that circumcision and Christianity were incompatible with one another, and that the act of circumcision was a "heresy" that undermined the foundations of the Christian religion. He called upon the inquisitors and the secular authorities to impose the extreme penalties of the law

upon Christians who practiced circumcision, so that it would not be possible to apply to them the saying of Ezekiel (13.5): “Ye have not gone up into the breaches, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord.”

On another occasion, Espina preached in Medina del Campo against the heretics who tried to point out the existence of forgeries in the New Testament because it contained quotations from the prophets which did not appear in the same form in the Hebrew Bible. *Converso* merchants, who had heard a monk of Jewish origin make statements to that effect in Flanders, had had themselves circumcised secretly when they returned to Medina del Campo; and now, complained Espina, they were about to set out for North Africa and their friends were already awaiting them in Seville. There were some who denied the immortality of the soul and were fond of quoting a proverb which was often attributed to *marranos* in the records of the Inquisition: *En esto mundo non me veras malpasar, e en el otro non me veras penar*. (“In this world you will not see me suffering, and in the other you will not see me in torment.”) In conclusion, Espina discussed the heresies of those who believed that the fate of human beings was determined by the stars. Such heretics found support for their astrological beliefs in several talmudic passages which, according to R. Isaac ‘Arama and others, were often quoted by Jewish fatalists. In their view the career of Jesus of Nazareth had been astrologically determined. Indeed, the records of the Toledo trial contain references to the belief that Abraham, Jesus and Mohammed were all influenced by the stars. Espina listed all the types of heresy current in his day so as to convince the Spanish people that a well-organized and active Inquisition should be set up to deal with the *conversos*. With the same purpose in mind, he gave a detailed description of the canonical laws of the Inquisition, which seem not to have been generally known in Castile.

With the same object, but employing much harsher means, Espina attacked Judaism itself. He rehearsed arguments he had had with Jews, and repeated the old Christian strictures upon the Talmud and the Midrash. His method was new in so far as he gave a frank and shameless exposition of his political and publicistic aims, the like of which is not to be found in any earlier theological work of the Middle Ages. In his sketch of Jewish history, which is permeated with hatred of the Jews, he uses such titles of chapters as "Cruel Deeds Perpetrated by Jews upon Christians"; "Their Defeats and Expulsions"; "The Miracles with which Christianity Demonstrated its Superiority over the Jews," and the like. All these tales—whether copied from books, based on rumors, or invented by Espina himself—had an identical political aim. He revelled especially in stories of blood libels. There was, for instance, an incident which occurred in 1454 in the vicinity of Valladolid, where Jews were charged with murdering a Christian child and cutting his heart out for magical purposes. The noble who owned the place had one of the accused put to torture and extracted a confession from him, but was not able to proceed with the case because, at the request of the Jews, the government intervened and transferred the trial to the king's court at Valladolid. Espina boasts that he thereupon proclaimed the vile deed of the Jews from the pulpit of the church in that city, but that two of the three judges on the king's court were descended from *conversos*, and that, to his great regret, the trial had therefore been postponed and was still pending when he wrote his *Fortalitium Fidei*. The author beseeches Heaven that the vengeance of God may descend upon the heads of those wicked judges.

Espina then goes on to relate another incident which occurred, as he says, in a French city. A Jew asked the head hangman for the heart of a Christian criminal who had been sentenced to death. Acting upon his wife's advice, the hang-

man gave the Jew the heart of a swine instead of a human heart. The Jew buried the heart in the ground, but swine came from the whole countryside and attacked the spot where it was hidden, tearing at one another with their teeth in anger and frenzy. And so the plot of the Jew against the Christians was revealed to the world. The tale is told ostensibly without ulterior motive, but we shall see what use was one day to be made of it by Torquemada and his assistants.

A third story in Espina's book involves the Jews of Segovia who, he alleged, desecrated the host in 1415. One of the criminals was supposed to be Don Meir, physician to Henry III. When Don Meir was questioned under torture—so runs the tale—he confessed not only this sin, but another committed previously, namely, that he had poisoned the king. He was thereupon sentenced to be tortured to death. This story was related at a time when the names of Don Meir's son and grandson still appeared in the official registers as exempt from the duty of paying certain taxes because of important services Don Meir had rendered to his king.²⁹

Of the numerous tales about expulsions of Jews with which Espina regales his readers, one example will suffice: his story of the manner in which the Jews were expelled from England. Seeking to appease the wrath of God, who had visited war, famine and plague upon his country, the king of England decided to compel all the Jews in his realm to embrace Christianity. But the wrath of God was not appeased thereby, and the sufferings of the people increased. When the king asked the clergy to interpret the matter for him, they replied that it was due only to the heinousness of the converted Jews, who continued to sin even as they had done before they became Christians. They had occupied all the posts—"of pen and of rod"—in the kingdom, and enslaved the Christians. God then put wisdom into the heart of the king, and he rid his kingdom of these serpents, in the following manner. He pitched two tents on the sea-shore. In one tent he placed a

scroll of the Law, and in the other a cross. Then he sat between the two tents on the royal throne, and courteously summoned the converted Jews to indicate the religion they would rather choose. All the Jews, with their womenfolk and children, then ran joyfully into the tent where the Torah was. As they came into the tent, they were slaughtered one by one and their bodies were flung into the sea. "Thus the land was purged, and an end was put to its affliction." Espina claims to have read this tale in the English chronicles. The fact is, however, that the English chronicles do not and cannot contain such a story, because the vexatious *converso* problem was unknown in such a form in all countries but Spain. Perhaps the friar did not intend to have his fable taken literally, because he concludes with the remark: "Now let the Spaniards ponder well whether such a calamity has spread and persists and flourishes in their own midst!" ³⁰

A year after completing his book in 1461, Alfonso de Espina proposed in his own name and in the name of all the friars of the Franciscan Order in Madrid—in a letter which he addressed to the Order of St. Jerome—that the two Orders collaborate in rooting out the evil from their country. The head of the Order of St. Jerome, Alfonso de Oropesa, promptly joined in the holy war. He headed a delegation to Madrid, where he informed the king that the incessant party strife that was splitting the cities of Castile into two hostile camps was caused by the intermingling of believers and infidels. The strife was also due, he added, to the well-grounded complaints of the old Christians regarding the religious misconduct of the *conversos*, who were never punished. For lack of an alternative, the embittered populace rose up and took vengeance upon the *conversos* on their own initiative. Oropesa suggested that the king put an end to this state of anarchy by means of suitable regulations, seeing to it that the unbelievers mended their ways in accordance with the laws of the church and the state; and that he instruct all the bish-

ops in his kingdom to establish an Inquisition forthwith and punish the blasphemers as they deserved. As soon as the people would see an episcopal Inquisition dealing energetically with the matter and the king suppressing all attempts at unlawful vengeance, it would be possible, Oropesa was convinced, to quell all the disorders in the country at a single stroke.

The king promptly agreed, and authorized Oropesa to carry out his plan. In this way, and under the existing laws, Oropesa expected to solve within a short time one of the most difficult problems ever to confront statesmen.

Maestre de Espina, however, remained constant to his own more fanatical and extreme plans. He and his associates, at the very time they were negotiating with the king, incited the populace of Madrid with their sermons. A member of the Franciscan Order, one Fernando de la Plaza, went so far as to claim in one of his sermons that he had gathered up, with his own hands, one hundred foreskins of circumcised Christians. Such ludicrous tales (the like of which, incidentally, were later to appear in the records of the trials held by Torquemada's Inquisition) incensed the king, who demanded to see the foreskins with his own eyes. The chronicler Enriquez del Castillo, who was the apologist for Henry IV, cites only this one instance from all the discussions about the *conversos*, and conceals the fact that it was this king who first authorized the establishment of the Inquisition in Castile. Enriquez del Castillo obviously wished to clear the king of the suspicion that he hated the *conversos*—a defense that still seemed to have some political value in those “liberal” days. The fact is that Enriquez del Castillo and other contemporary chroniclers tried to cover up the religious and ecclesiastical aspects of the *converso* problem—as if ordinary party differences, with no particular religious background, were the decisive factor in this issue.

Under the authority conferred upon him, with the approval

of the local archbishop, Oropesa established the Inquisition in the city of Toledo and its environs and for a whole year questioned and punished transgressors and kept all the factions quiescent. We do not know what penalties Oropesa imposed, but it seems that he meted out no death sentences. Then he returned to his monastery of San Bartolomé de Lupiana near Guadalajara, and there, in 1465, he wrote a book entitled *Lumen ad revelationem gentium* (Light of the Gentiles), in which he outlined his moderate plan of reform, one which may have been acceptable to enlightened and sincere Christians, but which was rejected absolutely by the fanatics. It was the latter, however, who, for the next fifteen years, were to have a decisive voice in the determination of religious policy. Oropesa defended the *conversos*, saying that it was not fair to suspect them merely because of their Jewish birth. On the other hand, he referred in harsh terms to the Jews who, he claimed, beguiled the simple folk, and tried to convert *conversos* and old Christians to their religion. He reproved the government and the ecclesiastical authorities for entrusting the administration of their affairs to Jews, thus raising the latter's hopes that their Messiah would soon appear. In fact, Oropesa wished to isolate the *conversos* from the Jews and to lead them aright by kindness.³¹

Nevertheless, during these very years, the Inquisition began to persecute the *conversos* in Spain, and R. Isaac Abravanel expressed the belief that under the conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in 1464, many terrible new calamities would take place, "such as had never before befallen the Jews, or any other people, since God placed mankind upon the earth, and such as no eye had ever beheld; even in imagination no such terrible evils can be conceived or described as will befall all those known by the name of Jews."

³² Some fragmentary records of the proceedings of the Castilian Inquisition in 1464 have come down to us; and complete records of the trials of the Inquisition in Valencia have been

preserved from this year. The Inquisition in Valencia seems to have dealt leniently in comparison with the acts of extreme fanaticism performed on the part of the Inquisition in Castile, which were later methodically adopted by Torquemada. All these records reveal not only Christian fanaticism, but also the firm faith and the hope of redemption cherished by many *conversos*.

THE REVIVAL OF MESSIANISM; EMIGRATION TO PALESTINE AND THE FIRST TRIALS OF THE INQUISITION

Espina's *Fortalitium Fidei* itself contains much precious information about the messianic ferment which became more intense after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. The agitation spread to all parts of the Diaspora, but particularly to Jews and *conversos* in Spain. The Targum on Lamentations 4.21 ("Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz: The cup shall pass over unto thee also; Thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked") was interpreted as a prophecy of the fall of the second capital of the Roman Empire. Letters received in western Europe from Jerusalem predicted that Redemption would come that very year (5214=1453-54). Thereafter seers of visions and calculators of the date when the world would come to an end closely followed the conquests of the Turks and their victories over Christians. The statements by the author of *Fortalitium Fidei* about the return of *conversos* to Judaism in his day seem almost fantastic, yet they are confirmed by the records. In 1464, the inquisitors in Valencia were informed that many *conversos* had left the city and sailed for the Orient, where they intended to return to the religion of their fathers. Some of the court records dealing with the *conversos* who were caught are still extant. Most of these belonged to a single family: Rodrigo Cifuentes, baptized at about the age of twenty-five in Andalusia; his wife Elienor, whose parents had been baptized in Valencia in 1391; their

daughters Speranza and Aldonza, the young wife of Pedro Alfonso de Cordova, a *converso* dealer in gems, who had previously fled the country and was living abroad as a Jew; Gonzalvo de Cordova, a silversmith and brother of Pedro Alfonso, an uncircumcised *converso* who had once before been tried by an ordinary ecclesiastical judge; and Juan Pardo, a worker and dealer in gems, who had been baptized in Lisbon at the age of twenty-five. The accused at first tried to deny the real purpose of their journey, claiming that Pedro Alfonso was not living as a Jew abroad, and that they had merely intended to meet him in Venice. But Elienor's confession confirmed the suspicions of the inquisitors; a *converso* who had returned from the East to Valencia some years previously testified that he had seen Pedro in Damascus and that it had then been his intention to go to Cairo. When the witness was asked whether it was true that Pedro had become a Jew, he replied: "No, but he is a rich man." When the *conversos* heard this reply, they burst into laughter. The prosecutor claimed that the ship on which the accused had embarked was bound not for Venice, but for Morea (Greece) and for Beirut. Thence they had intended to go on to Damascus and to re-enter the Jewish fold there. From letters received from Sicily and other places, it appeared that seventy *converso* families from Valencia had gone to Valona in Albania, and there resumed the Jewish way of life. The witnesses for the prosecution described the ways of the accused and the purpose of their journey. These *conversos* kept the Sabbath and worked on Sunday; they ate no forbidden food; they recited Jewish prayers and forbade their Moslem maidservant to have anything to do with Christianity. Some Jews from another locality had visited the accused in their home and spoken to them about the Jewish religion. Concerning Pedro de Cordova, the witnesses for the prosecution testified that they had seen him in the Jewish quarters of Constantinople, Beirut and Damascus wearing Jewish dress. Pedro's wife and

family were greatly excited by the letters they received from him. He wrote that it was only to please his wife that he had become a Jew again, but that he was unable to return to Valencia for fear that he would be burned at the stake. He asked that at least his son should be sent to him; and that if his wife were willing to join him, the way was open and he would send her the money for her travelling expenses. His wife and her relatives finally plucked up courage and made preparations for the journey and for their return to Judaism. They often discussed circumcision, and marriage “according to the Law of Moses and Israel.”

Letters received by them from Constantinople contained predictions that “the end” was at hand; such messianic legends were in circulation among the *conversos* in several curious versions. These letters affirmed as true the report that the Messiah had already been born: he was a young boy, and lived on a mountain near Constantinople (probably because Constantinople, as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, was due to be destroyed before the Italian Rome). This mountain was said to be like that on which the Lord had given the Torah to Moses. None could see the Messiah except circumcised Jews; if any non-Jews looked at him, he would blind them forthwith by his dazzling radiance. It was said that men of Jewish origin who came to Constantinople would find all good things there; the writers of the letters claimed that, according to a prophecy cherished by them, those who remained in Spain would not find there so much as a measure of lentils, for there would be great bloodshed in those lands (Spain), while those who were found to be circumcised in the overseas countries—even if they were born Christians—would, if they repented, enjoy all good things and be spiritually saved. As for the others, it would not go well with them and their souls would not be saved.

This was what Elienor and her daughter Speranza told their women friends, and Speranza added: “All the good that

the Gentiles do will remain in their graves, and will be found there on the Day of Judgment: but all the good done by those who repent will be taken and accepted by the Lord our God.” Speranza also spoke of a certain woman, “a real *Goya*,” who had gone overseas and became a Jewess, and of another woman who had done the like; and, “behold, the people there carried them in their arms” because they had been “Gentiles” and repented; but in Spain these women had not been esteemed; and thus it would be done to all who repented. “The Gentiles do not see us (do not understand us), for they are blind and know not that the Lord our God hath decreed that for a time we should be subject to them, but that we shall now surpass them (have the upper hand), for God hath promised us that after we go to those lands (overseas), we shall ride on horses and pass them by.” Speranza also declared that the Turk was the Antichrist. He destroyed Christian churches and turned them into stables, but for the Jews and their synagogues he had great respect and treated them reverently; and all who would go to these countries and live the good life would have a right to such honors and to all good things. The outcome of the trial is not known.³³

At about that time, in 1465, converts to Judaism were received into the fold, under circumstances of great solemnity, by the community of Huesca. About twenty-five years later, this incident was brought up at a trial of the Inquisition, and those who had a part in it were forced to confess and testify concerning certain particulars. Several were then elderly men, in whose lives this had been a very memorable event, so that the reliability of their evidence is beyond question.

It seems that in the sixties (of the fifteenth century), the communities in Aragon provided refuge for some *conversos* who escaped from the religious and racial quarrels in Castile. The Jewish community of Huesca became the main center of religious propaganda. There the philosopher Maestre Abraham Bivach lived and taught. The religio-philosophical views

of this excellent man are known to us from his book *The Way of Faith* (*Derekh Emunah*), which was printed in the autumn of 1521.

The author of this book tried to define faith with exactness as an absolute value of immanent confidence, transcending rational perception; he was perhaps the first in the history of medieval Jewish philosophical literature to do this. In order to achieve his aim, Maestre Abraham could not content himself with the thoughts of the Jewish-Arabic philosophy in which he had grown up, but had to find support in late Christian scholastic literature and also—in a lesser way—in Christian patristic literature. He cites Eusebius' *Praeparatio evangelica*, which had been translated into Latin in his time, and he had undoubtedly read some chapters of this book. This is not the place to discuss how far Rabbi Abraham Bivach did succeed theoretically in solving the huge religio-philosophical problems set before him. But it is clear that his writings, filled as they were with inspired enthusiasm, were apt to strengthen the faithful in Israel in their struggle against Christianity, to bring near and restore to Judaism the minds of the converted that were still undecided at heart. This practical aim of *The Way of Faith* is apparent in a number of passages, and is stated most clearly and unreservedly in his sermon (fol. 55) on the passage "And Moses spoke to Hovav the son of Re'u'el" (Num. 10.29–33):

And he, that is, Hovav, thought that Moses our teacher spoke to him of the imaginary goodness—riches and properties, fields and houses—that will belong to Israel . . . ; and so he replied that he was not so poor and destitute as to be forced to abandon his country for the sake of material success. . . . And so Moses replied unto him: You do not understand me, for I do not speak to you of material good, but of the real good, which is the good got through faith, which is spiritual and eternal. Therefore it is said: Please do not forsake us, for thou

knowest our campings in the desert (Num. 10.31), etc., which means: Please do not forsake our faith and perfection, through which one may attain perfection and goodness. And this is the meaning of *for thou knowest*. Through the fact that we adhere to our faith you know that we camp in the desert; for did we not put our hope in this truth and perfection, how could we have endured all this hardship and cruelty? *And thou shalt be our eyes*—which means that, when the children of Israel will grow weary of wandering in the desert, we may answer and tell them thus: Look you upon Hovav, who left his wealth and property to go with us and receive our faith, etc.

It seems obvious that these words were uttered on purpose, and a very important purpose it was, which later became the subject of a most destructive inquisitional trial. R. Abraham and his learned associate, R. Moses Arrondi, were approached by a wealthy *converso* from Castile, a man about fifty years of age by the name of Juan de Ciudad, and his son. They came to the home of R. Abraham Bivach and his brother R. Isaac, also a physician, in Huesca, with the intention of being circumcised. Their request was complied with, not in secret and quietly, but with considerable solemnity. On the eve of the day of the circumcision R. Abraham Bivach called a meeting of the local notables at the home of his friend R. Abraham Almosnino, a broker by vocation, and grandfather of R. Moses Almosnino, the well-known rabbi of Salonica. The next morning, after services in the synagogue, R. Abraham Bivach asked to have a meeting of the community council convened, and the meeting was held that same evening in the community house. There R. Abraham Bivach explained that a great man by the name of Juan de Ciudad had come to Huesca to embrace the Jewish religion, after which he would journey to Jerusalem; those present were in duty bound to help him carry out his intention. R. Abraham

then swore the members of the council to secrecy, forbidding them to mention the matter even to their own families.

The circumcision was performed in the home of the Bivach brothers in the presence of twenty or thirty men—rabbis, learned physicians, prominent merchants, artisans, and visiting students—who were studying Torah under the scholars of Huesca. R. Abraham opened the proceedings by addressing Juan de Ciudad in the following words:

Sir, state your wishes now in the presence of these Jews, for, truth to tell, you are placing all of us and yourself in great jeopardy. Make certain that you are not impelled by excitement or by any motive other than reverence for the Law of Moses.

Juan de Ciudad replied that he was impelled by no motive other than reverence for the Law of Moses; it was that which had led him to leave his country, Castile, with other *conversos* who had sold their property for a trifle when they left; and when they reached Valencia, all their possessions had been taken from them. He had then resolved to make a tour of the Jewish communities and collect funds; he had come to Huesca because his friends R. Abraham Bivach and R. Moses Arrondi lived there. R. Abraham Bivach then questioned the penitent in the words of the Talmud (Yeb. 47a): “What reason have you for desiring to become a proselyte; do you not know that Israel at the present time is persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions?” He went on to speak of the six hundred and thirteen commandments and the thirteen principles of faith. Thereupon Juan was given a Hebrew name. Following the medieval procedure for the reception of penitents, he was bathed; his head, forehead, arms, hands, and legs were scraped; his head was shaved and his nails cut. After the circumcision, he was congratulated by his new co-religionists on having recognized the truth and saved his soul from Hell. Juan’s son was circumcised at a

more modest gathering. When the father and son recovered, they proceeded to the Holy Land. Soon afterwards, a man by the name of Samuel Parenti was circumcised in Huesca. Other penitents—Jews by birth who had undergone baptism—were also welcomed into the fold. One of these men was popularly called “The Talmud,” owing to his great learning; for he was a noted talmudist and philosopher, and often preached in the synagogue. Only religious laxity, toleration and the state of war then prevailing in the Kingdom of Aragon can explain the fact that such actions could take place almost publicly, and that the circumcised men could go their way unhindered.³⁴

At about this time, a certain *converso* craftsman of Cordova, stockingmaker by trade, who had been discovered practicing Judaism, was led in solemn procession through the streets of the city by order of the bishop and then up to a platform from which he was to take a public oath to transgress no more. When the man ascended the platform, he made a declaration and said, “Behold, I must die one death. It is better to die now and not a second time. I declare that the Law of Moses is the best, and that by it shall men be saved!” He was seized and stoned to death. The whole city split into two camps, and open warfare broke out between the Christians and the *conversos*.³⁵

THE CATHOLIC MONARCHS

RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS TENSION UP TO THE REIGN OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA

In the meantime, literary antisemitism had been growing. In the last years of the reign of Henry IV, low and vulgar ditties were composed like “Coplas de Mingo Revulgo” and “Coplas del Provincial,” which vilified men close to the court and referred to their Jewish origin.¹ In a similar vein, Rodrigo de Cota, himself of Jewish extraction, wrote a satire on the occasion of the marriage of a son of Diego Arias de Ávila and the daughter of a noble Christian belonging to the family of Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza, who was to achieve fame as the “Cardinal of Spain.” Cota sneers:

It was the Jewish God [*el Dio*, the term used by Jews who avoided using the plural form of *Dios*], who ar-

ranged this match. The bridegroom is the son of an honorable pillar of the *Kahal* (the Jewish community)—a tax-farmer, of course—and related to the aben Shoshan, aben Nahmias, and aben Saboca families. At the wedding repast the dietary laws, and all Jewish customs, will be observed very strictly.²

There is no need, in a serious historical work, to give additional examples of such low jesting. Men of greater dignity and of higher degree referred in terms of the utmost contempt to snobbish *conversos* of humble origin who aspired to move among poets of exalted rank. Concerning one such *converso* poet, Juan Poeta of Valladolid, it was said that he was “neither a Jew nor a Christian, but an excellent *marrano* (swine).” On his way to the Holy Land—so ran the satire—he had been seized at Fez by the Moslems; and, as God did not split the sea before him, he adopted the religion of Islam. The Moslems wished to circumcise him, but he convinced them that it was unnecessary. If he succeeded in reaching the Holy Land, he would choose that one of the three religions which was most to his taste; but he would remain a *Yahudi* in any event. At one time, according to the satirist, he desired to be absolved, in view of a proclamation made by the Catholic Church in Valencia; but all the sacred vessels and sacrificial symbols were transformed in his sight into Jewish ritual objects, including the prayer shawl he donned upon the advice of Maestre Shemaya (the rabbi and supreme judge of Castilian Jewry during the reign of Henry IV). On Friday, this apostate went to church and on the Sabbath he remained at home, where he prayed and meditated on the prophecies in the Book of Daniel. Finally, mention is made of the poet’s grandmother, who was once sentenced by Doctor Franco (probably an inquisitor) to ecclesiastical penalties for having kept the Jewish precepts. Another poet portrayed this Juan at Naples, where he claimed to have brought him greetings from his father, an old-clothes peddler in the streets of

Valladolid. The aged father inquired whether his son was living as a Christian or as a Jew; it had been rumored that he was a Jew. One of his sons had been burned at the stake and his wife placed under arrest. The poet advised Juan freely to confess his sins and return to the fold of the church.³

These examples suffice to indicate how the *conversos* were mirrored in the poetry of the period; the type delineated there bore a decided resemblance to that found in anti-Jewish theological literature and in the records of the Inquisition. The *conversos* constituted the most urgent public problem during the reign of Henry IV. In 1465 the Castilian nobles, led by Oropesa, presented the king with a list of grievances, many of which related to the Jews and demanded that the anti-Jewish and anti-Moslem laws of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries should be so enforced as to isolate Jews and Moslems by means of separate quarters, distinctive badges, dismissal from public office, and ban on social intercourse with Christians. Another demand called for the enforcement of the anti-usury laws enacted at Alcalá in 1348. Symptomatic of the spirit of the times was a new demand that Jews and Moslems who desecrated the host should be tried as heretics. In particular, the king was urged to have the bishops set up a well-organized Inquisition to deal with those suspected of Jewish heresy, so that the sinners would be punished and the innocent protected against insult and injury.⁴ These legislative proposals were conceived in the spirit of Oropesa's moderate program. But, so long as the civil war continued, it was not possible to solve the *converso* problem by legislation.

In the same year (1465), the mutinous nobles formally deposed Henry IV and appointed his brother Alfonso king in his stead. A rumor spread by ill-disposed persons that Don Alfonso intended to prosecute *conversos* suspected of religious transgressions is mentioned by the chronicler Alfonso de Palencia, a diplomat of humanistic and international cul-

ture, who was one of the severest critics of the unsatisfactory conditions under Henry IV and an advocate of political and ecclesiastical reforms. This rumor, according to Palencia, fertilized the seeds of dissension that had been sown ever since the days of Alvaro de Luna. Remembering their former troubles and apprehensive of sufferings to come, the *conversos* therefore continued to support the party of King Henry. Such considerations led a priest of *converso* descent in the church of Toledo, Francisco de Toledo, a professor of theology and a man of unimpeachable character, to reverse his attitude and cease inveighing against King Henry in his sermons; he even disclosed his opinion that the king's dethronement had been unlawful.⁵

The fears of the *conversos* seem to have been not ill-grounded. The protagonists of political reform were under the necessity of putting an end to the ambiguous stand of the *conversos*, even though at the time Christian notables like Palencia himself still overlooked the significant religious factor that determined this stand. As a matter of fact, the new king's attitude towards the *conversos* was influenced initially solely by their political position, since he had first and foremost to establish his regime.

Alfonso entered Toledo late in May 1467; late in July, after he left the city, open conflict again broke out between the old Christians and the new. Some placed the blame upon the *conversos* themselves. Their leader was Fernando de la Torre, brother of the *baccalaureus* Alvaro de la Torre, one of the *regidores* (municipal councillors). Fernando concealed arms and even a cannon in his home. The *conversos* attempted to win some of the nobles, including supporters of Alfonso, over to their side. They explained to the nobles that the old Christians had always humiliated them and were threatening them with death sentences and expulsion—all because they envied and begrudged them the riches they had amassed by dint of hard work and enterprise. A further cause of this conflict was

the quarrel between the Chapter of the Cathedral and the *alcalde* (judge) Alvar Gomez, secretary of Henry IV, who had deserted his master when he saw his fortunes declining. Gomez was a *converso*, but seems to have had no love for his people. One of the charges made against him by the priests of the church was that he had given orders to assault Jews who wished to farm some of the church taxes. For such infringements of the rights of the church Gomez was placed under the ban. For all that, he still continued to attend church.

These were the causes for the civil war which flared up on July 2, 1467, and was fought in the streets of the city for three days running. Four large streets, where none but *conversos* lived, went up in flames. Both de la Torre brothers were hanged and buried in the Jewish cemetery by order of the old Christians. Some Hebrew books were alleged to have been found then in the homes of the *conversos*. Many of the *conversos* who fought in these battles were undoubtedly involuntary converts who practiced the Jewish rites and believed in the Torah—a fact confirmed by the records of the Inquisition of the middle and late 1480's. Apprehensions voiced in the 1460's only by men of rebellious and revolutionary tendencies, and deeds then perpetrated by brute force, were to receive legal validity and form at a later date. For the time being, however, this method had not yet been adopted. Later, when Don Henry was defeated in battle near Olmedo, the municipality of Toledo asked King Alfonso to approve its regulations and actions in regard to the *conversos*. At that time Don Alfonso indignantly rejected the proposal; but, when the city went over to the side of his adversary, the king did not hesitate to grant the required confirmation.⁶

In the same year (1468), Don Alfonso died. The king's sister, Dona Isabel, was crowned as the heiress to the throne of Castile. In 1469 she was married to Don Fernando, son of John II of Aragon. In the course of the dramatic and historic developments of the following years—after a certain

amount of temporizing—the new policy of the Catholic Monarchs in regard to the *conversos* was clearly and distinctly defined.

Jews had had a hand in the arrangements for the romantic marriage of Isabella to Ferdinand.⁷ R. Eliahu Capsali (who questioned the exiles from Spain who arrived in Candia concerning the history of the Spanish Jews) relates several tales in which popular legend and polemical satire are interfused. Capsali describes this match and the part played by the Jews in arranging it in garish and somewhat ludicrous colors. Yet, from the accounts of the Christian historians and from the records in the archives, these legends appear to have been by no means unfounded. It was Pedro de la Cavalleria (doubtless a member of the well-known family of *conversos* in Saragossa*), jointly with the historian Alfonso de Palencia, who brought to Castile the famous pearl collar that served as a pledge for carrying out the marriage contract.

One of the Castilians who later joined the camp of Dona Isabel was Don Abraham Seneor of Segovia, the chief tax farmer of Castile during the latter part of the reign of Henry IV. Alfonso de Palencia describes Seneor as “a man of experience and one faithful to the laws of friendship.” This Abraham Seneor and Alfonso de Quintanilla (who later served the Catholic Monarchs as auditor—*Contador Mayor*) convinced Don Andreas de Cabrera, commander of the fortress of Segovia, that Henry IV was unfit to rule, and persuaded him, early in 1474, to hand over the city and the fortress of Segovia to the young royal couple. Lastly, one of the most earnest advocates of the reorganization of Spain under the leadership of the prince from Aragon was Alfonso de la Cavalleria, a *converso* from Saragossa, son of the Pedro de la Cavalleria mentioned above (p. 276). Alfonso was an enlightened man, a humanist, but a Jewish heart beat in the

*Not to be confused with the father of Alfonso de la Cavalleria, mentioned above.

recesses of his being, and there were times when this heart disclosed things not discernible to the casual observer. The Spanish patriots seem to have had no cause to doubt Alfonso's political integrity. Palencia relates that he was reputed to be the most eminent jurist of his day, a man whose keen intellect speedily solved the most complex political problems that his king was faced with. After the death of Henry IV, Alfonso accompanied Prince Ferdinand to Castile and helped him to establish his political authority against the claims of his wife Dona Isabel. There was good reason for the mutual understanding that existed between the young rulers and their helpers of Jewish descent. Both Jews and *conversos* with Jewish sympathies were inclined to support a strong regime that would maintain law and order in the country and to overlook at first the possible consequences from their religious viewpoint. Don Fernando and Dona Isabel welcomed the helping hands; and, in the struggles between the old and the new Christians, dealt separately with each incident so as to further their own political advantage. It was only after the new rulers had consolidated their position that they framed a definite policy in regard to the *conversos*: a policy of political and ecclesiastical persecution.

The tempest of religious and racial hatred broke with unprecedented violence, and in 1473 passed mainly over the cities of Andalusia. At that time the young rulers were still working to consolidate their political position, and had as yet succeeded in extending their sway only to a few localities in northern Castile. Their authority did not then extend to the southern part of the country, while the feeble old king, Henry IV, was powerless to intervene. In describing these developments, we propose to follow here the detailed account of the historian Alfonso de Palencia.⁸

According to Palencia, all the disorders were instigated by Don Juan Pacheco, head of the Order of Santiago, who took an especial delight in sowing the seeds of dissension, especially

after he had realized that the majority of the population sided with Ferdinand and Isabella, and that this was the only matter on which *conversos* and old Christians were in accord, although they disagreed about everything else and hated one another with the utmost bitterness. Pacheco, who aspired to dominate the municipal administration of Seville, began by carrying out his designs in the neighboring city of Cordova. In Cordova also, the old Christians complained that the *conversos* had grown wealthy and insolent, that they wanted to have sole control of the municipal administration and yet were not ashamed to practice their Jewish rites in public. The bishop of Cordova tried to prevent such judaizing activities, and the *conversos* therefore looked upon him as their enemy. However, Alfonso de Aguilar, the commander of the fortress of Cordova, sided with the *conversos*, and helped them to hire three-hundred well-armed soldiers. The old Christians, for their part, organized themselves into bands for fighting the *conversos*. This popular movement was led by a certain blacksmith, who won the support of the people by his kindness to the Christian poor and his violent hatred of the *conversos*.

One day, while a religious procession was passing through the streets of the city, a young *converso* girl poured out some water from her house into the street. The blacksmith believed that the girl had poured urine on the procession, and declared war upon the heretics and detractors of religion. The homes of the *conversos* were set on fire. A Christian knight who tried to oppose the rioters was wounded. His kinsmen hastened to his aid. The conflict spread to all parts of the city. The blacksmith fled for his life to the church of San Francisco. Alfonso de Aguilar called to the blacksmith to come out of the church for a parley and flung a spear at him. The blacksmith was carried back to his home mortally wounded. The *conversos* armed themselves and fortified their quarters. The blacksmith's men spread inflammatory rumors.

Laborers and peasants streamed in from the villages ready for rioting and pillage. Upon Aguilar's advice some of the *conversos* with whom he was friendly brought their possessions to the fortress and took refuge there. The other *conversos*' strong stand alienated even the best of the old Christians, including Aguilar. Now all took a hand in burning, looting and killing, sparing neither age nor sex. The disturbances reached their peak in the middle of March 1473, after sixteen successive days. The *conversos* who succeeded in escaping from the city wandered about in the fields without finding a safe shelter, as the peasants assaulted and robbed them wherever they gathered. Most of the *conversos* finally found a haven at Palma, under the protection of the noble Don Luis de Puertocarrero. The municipal council of Cordova passed an ordinance to exclude *conversos* from posts in the municipality. Similar disorders took place in other Andalusian towns. Only in Seville did the nobles and the people join in suppressing all attempts at rioting.

Shortly before these disorders—so Palencia relates—a certain incident raised the messianic hopes of the *conversos*. It was rumored in Andalusia that a huge fish had been seen off the shores of Portugal which had attacked a ship and been killed. Some *conversos* felt certain that this fish was the Leviathan, “concerning which their prophets had prophesied.” The overjoyed *conversos* sent emissaries to bring them some pieces of the mysterious fish. Instead of the hoped-for deliverance, however, came further violence.⁹

Pacheco had intended to seize the fortress of Segovia by starting disorders like those in Andalusia, but his designs were thwarted. With the assistance of Abraham Seneor, the city and the fortress of Segovia passed under the rule of Ferdinand and Isabella. In this instance the royal couple sided with the *conversos*, as it was in their own interest to do so. According to Palencia, the *conversos* believed that Cabrera, the commander of the fortress, was their ally; and

Pacheco incited the upper-class citizens against them by alleging that the *conversos* had occupied all the public offices to the detriment of the nobles and of the general population. The *conversos*, charged Pacheco, did not scruple to make war and to conspire against the Christian religion, being a separate people with antagonistic aims, which had nothing whatever in common with the old Christians but most brazenly upheld everything that was repugnant to them. And, indeed, the bitter fruits had already ripened in a number of towns. It was intolerable to many Spaniards that aliens, who had formerly followed only the most menial pursuits and been excluded from all honors, should now be sitting in offices and arbitrarily giving orders detrimental to the aristocratic upper class. By speaking in this way and spreading the report of the riots in Cordova, an attempt was made to stir up trouble between the parties in Segovia as well. The *conversos* retorted that Pacheco was disseminating falsehoods to further his political aims, and there was a great difference between the *conversos* of Andalusia and those of northern Castile. They pointed out as an example the Sancta Maria family which, in spite of its Jewish origin, had become a model for the whole Christian Church; most *conversos*, they claimed, were like this family. The upshot of the matter was that Don Juan Pacheco made no headway with his slanders and did not gain control of the city and fortress of Segovia. Neither was he able to seize Toledo.¹⁰

There was no end to the troubles of the *conversos* in Andalusia. Many of them fled from Cordova to Seville under the leadership of a certain Pedro de Cordova. They applied to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the most powerful noble in Andalusia, for permission to settle in the fortress of Gibraltar. The duke was inclined to approve their request in consideration of their help in the defense of the city and in the war against the Moslems. But his advisers told him that such men of low estate—shoemakers and pawnbrokers—would be useless in

warfare. Not only that, they added: these *conversos* were bad Christians and practiced the Jewish religion; that was the real cause of all their misfortunes, and it was unlikely that they would change their ways after settling in a fortified locality where they would not be supervised by the church. Indeed, his advisers assured the duke, the *conversos* had chosen Gibraltar because from there they could emigrate unhindered to Egypt and Jerusalem. And even if they should not be able to flee from Gibraltar, they would not need to fear denunciation there, and would be able to circumcise their sons and bring them up in the Jewish religion, for—as was generally known—Jewish mothers reserved their love for those of their children who rejected the Catholic faith and their dislike for those faithful to it. When the *conversos* of Seville saw incitement and disorders spreading to their vicinity, they too began to realize what awaited them. Many emigrated to Flanders or Italy. Those who remained in Seville set up defense units for their protection behind the walls of the large quarter which had been built by the Jews prior to 1391; for that purpose they hired 300 equestrian knights and 5000 foot-soldiers. When the *conversos* of Seville were also attacked, they joined in the settlement plans of their brethren from Cordova. The *conversos* actually began to establish themselves at Gibraltar, but internal quarrels hampered the project from the first. In 1476, the duke revoked the permit he had given them for the purpose.¹¹

Among those who witnessed and were affected by the disorders of 1473 in Cordova was Antonio de Montoro, a poet of humble Jewish origin whose one desire was to be like the courtly poets and to be received into their society. One noble poet advised him not to aim too high, but to sing of the work of the tailors and of the Jewish life to which he belonged. This aristocrat advised Montoro to describe how *kasher* meat and other Jewish dishes were eaten; how the Sabbath was observed, how the table was set for the Sabbath

and how the prohibition against touching money or the lamp was observed; how to celebrate the Passover and Succoth festivals; how the poet withdrew to the privacy of his home on the “great and good fast” and poured out his heart in copious tears; and how he mended old clothes and studied the Torah.

Montoro the *converso* used his pen to defend his persecuted race in the time of trouble. He reproached Alfonso de Aguilar for his change of attitude and betrayal during the Cordova disorders. If only the rioters had really been actuated by zeal for their religion, he cried out in a poem which he sent to the king, but they had been moved solely by their lust for pillage: “Hadst thou seen the ruins of Carmona, thy heart would have moved thee to tears of compassion!” And to Queen Isabella he wrote: “Behold, I am about seventy years of age. I practice all the Christian observances and pray to the pot of pork; but I can never wipe out the lineaments of a *confeso* (*converso*), or lose the name of a common old Jew.” Montoro appealed to the queen to put an end to the slaughter, for the Crucified One did not desire the death of the sinner. While contenting himself with defending his people for humanitarian reasons before the outer world, he revealed all that was in his Jewish heart in a poem which he sent to his friend Rodrigo de Cota, a *converso* who assailed his former brethren “so as to cause the downfall of the Synagogue.” Montoro reminded de Cota that, in aiming his darts at the *conversos*, he was striking against his own self, for he would not be able to conceal his Jewish origin.

“All of us come from the same *medina* (country),” he wrote, “from the family of al-Tabben, and if they be the sons of Don Moses, thy grandfather must be Don Bao(?). Thou are reputed to be the chronicler of his majesty the king of Sicily; but it would become thee better to record the act of Moses.”

¹² It was thus that men who had become thoroughly assimilated with the Christians spoke to one another in private. From this it is possible to infer the thoughts and discussions

which took place among the masses of simple *conversos*. The historian Alfonso de Palencia, who, as a good Christian, despised the Jews, but yet had such interesting things to tell about the life of the *conversos*, tried in vain to blot out the religious background of the conflicts of his age. During these conflicts—in the year 1473—the Inquisition again tried *conversos* in its courts at Cordova and Ciudad Real, and information concerning those trials has been preserved in the records of Torquemada's Inquisition.¹³ A direct line extends from the savage methods of the civil war to the method finally adopted by the Catholic Monarchs.

THE PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CATHOLIC MONARCHS

In 1474, when Henry IV passed away, Isabella and Ferdinand began to reign as equal partners in Castile. In 1479, Ferdinand inherited the crown of Aragon from his father and the two countries were united for a time under a personal alliance with coordinated policies. These Catholic Monarchs rank with the foremost statesmen of the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Once their regime had been firmly established and they had overcome opposition at home and abroad, they proceeded to stamp out the widespread anarchy in Castile, to repress the mutinous nobles and to maintain law and order. The entire reorganization of the State was carried out under the peremptory and explicit instructions of the indefatigable royal pair. They were assisted by highly educated men—jurists and bureaucrats—who had helped them to the throne and continued to merit their confidence. The king and queen strove to establish the State on foundations of law and justice, and with this in mind had a definite codification made of all the laws of Castile. This was their reason for interfering in the internal conduct of the municipalities and depriving them of their last vestiges of freedom. Moreover, they considered it their sacred duty to improve the status of the Spanish Church in the spirit of Catholic tradition and to

stiffen the slackened discipline in the monasteries. In planning their religious policy, the Jewish question loomed up before them as a highly important problem which demanded an immediate solution. The sovereigns were profoundly moved by the conviction that, just as they were in duty bound to obliterate every trace of Moslem rule from the soil of Spain, so it was incumbent upon them to restore unity of religion within their borders.

In the beginning, a distinction was drawn between *conversos* and Jews. In itself, the Jewish question was the simpler of the two. The Christian reforms were not, in fact, intended to undermine the ancient rights of the Jewish community, though these rights might have been subject to restrictions or change. As we have already mentioned, Ferdinand and Isabella were helped to the throne not only by *conversos*, who were regarded as devout Christians, but also by professing Jews. It was to their own advantage to rely upon such men, as most of the Castilian rulers had done before them, in the future as in the past. It was quite feasible to continue the traditional policy of relative toleration where the Jews were concerned. Indeed, at first the administrative policy of the State and its supporters in regard to the Jews was no different than it had always been. In general, the authorities protected the Jews against the outbreak of mounting antisemitism and intervened in their favor when unlawful attempts were made to prevent their settling in certain localities or to restrict their trading rights.¹⁴ The authorities kept a watchful eye on the Jewish aljamas, supervising their elections, the apportionment of their taxes, and their administration of law and justice. At certain intervals the government convened assemblies of representatives from all the Jewish communities of Castile.¹⁵ The agenda of these conferences included not only taxes, in which the government had an interest, but all internal administrative affairs. The affairs of the Jewish community and Jewish lawsuits were still conducted in accord-

ance with talmudic law, which was officially recognized by the State.

Now and again the Catholic Monarchs, like their predecessors, would appoint their Jewish favorites to important communal posts. The first instance of this kind was the king's appointment of Vidal Astori, a silversmith from Valencia, who had once served as his political agent in Portugal, to the post of rabbi and judge of several Castilian provinces. This appointment was, however, soon cancelled.¹⁶ In 1476 and thereafter, Don Abraham Seneor is mentioned not only as chief tax gatherer of Castile, but as chief rabbi, supreme judge, and apportioner of taxes for the whole Jewish population of Castile. Unlike Abraham Bienveniste, Abraham Seneor did not belong among the pious. The great rabbi Isaac de Leon was said to have called him

Sone Or—an enemy of light, for he was a skeptic, as is proved by the fact that he embraced Christianity together with his family when he was eighty years of age . . . And it was this Don Abraham who negotiated the marriage between the king and the queen . . . and it was for this that he was made rabbi of the Jews—and not with their approval.

Nevertheless, Don Abraham's appointment was a suitable one in the light of Jewish interests, and was not merely a reward for services rendered to the State. He faithfully exercised his political functions so as to promote the welfare of his people for sixteen years, and up to the very day of his baptism, at the time of the Great Expulsion, worked untiringly for the sake of the Jewish cause. On occasion he did not hesitate to quarrel even with the inquisitor, knowing that he could depend upon the backing of the king and queen, who were in need of his services. He presided at the general assemblies of the Jewish communities of Castile and rendered decisions, doubtless in consultation with talmudic scholars, as

the court rabbis had always done. A Hebrew letter written in 1487 says of Seneor:

And blessed be our God, who in His great mercy and loving kindness did not and will not remove the sceptre from Judah. He is our exilarch, in whose hand is the seal (*hotam*) from the king, over the aljamas, to banish or to fine.¹⁷

JEWES AND CONVERSOS AS STATE OFFICIALS

Don Abraham Seneor administered the indirect taxes of the Kingdom of Castile for many years, and farmed most of the taxes of the rich southern province himself. His signature appears in Latin characters on financial documents up to within a few months of the Expulsion. In his own sphere of activity, even a man like Torquemada had to reckon with his opinion. In 1475, Isabella granted him a life annuity of 150,000 *maravedis* in appreciation of his assistance to her and her husband in mounting the throne. When it transpired that it was unlawful to assign such revenues to a Jew—something previously unheard of—the annuity was registered in the name of the wife of Andreas de Cabrera, the commandant (*alcaide*) of the fortress (*alcazar*) of Segovia, both of whom were friends of Seneor. In 1480, after a law had been passed categorically prohibiting such assignments of government revenues, the queen sought, and found, other means of rewarding Seneor. In 1488, the sovereigns appointed him treasurer-general of the Hermandad, a military organization which, on the model of the municipal associations of Castile, had been formed for the maintenance of law and order. In this capacity, Seneor administered all the receipts and expenditures of the Hermandad. In his letter of appointment it was explicitly stated that he was to be accorded all due honors and privileges, like his Christian predecessor. Seneor's appointment was made at the very time when the

waves of anti-*converso* and anti-Jewish outbreaks were reaching unsurpassed heights.

No less influential than Seneor was his son-in-law, Rabbi Meir Melamed, who is mentioned in the archives by his Hebrew name and referred to as “Rabbi,” which indicates that he was ordained, since most of the other Jewish tax gatherers were addressed by the customary title of “Don.” A Hebrew author of the Expulsion period calls him the “king’s secretary,” probably because he held a post in one of the accounting departments. This goes to show that Don Abraham Seneor, his son-in-law, and perhaps other Jews like them, were privileged to hold under the Catholic Monarchs posts to which Jews had not been appointed in the two preceding reigns. In 1487, Rabbi Meir succeeded his aged father-in-law as chief administrator of the tax-farming, and in 1491 he began to farm most of the taxes himself. Such centralization of the tax-farming may have been connected with certain general administrative reforms inaugurated by the sovereigns. It is symptomatic of those times that a rabbi was the last administrator of the tax-farming under the old system and one of the first to install the new system. When Rabbi Meir’s father-in-law was appointed treasurer-general of the Hermandad, he himself was named chief collector (*arrendador e recaudador mayor*) of the outstanding dues of that organization. Actuated no doubt by antisemitic motives, the minor officials at first tried to place obstacles in his path, but the sovereigns saw to it that he was enabled to perform his duties unhindered.

Working side by side with Don Abraham Seneor and Rabbi Meir Melamed, and under their supervision, were numerous Jewish tax-farmers who must have enjoyed high standing, to judge by the breadth of their powers. Don David Alfacar, tax-farmer for the cities of Murcia and Cartagena, received in 1478 *carte blanche* for the appointment of his secretary.¹⁸ A Jew named Israel, or Gabriel-Israel, a tax-farmer in the city

of Llerena, owed his appointment to services he had rendered as an Arabic interpreter during the war with Granada.¹⁹ Names of various other Jewish tax-farmers are mentioned in the Hebrew literature of the period.

Abraham and Vidal Bienvenist (de la Cavalleria), grandsons of the aged Abraham Bienveniste, were truly loyal to their people. At the time of the Expulsion they negotiated with the Portuguese government to allow some of the Spanish exiles to settle in that country.²⁰ Rabbi Judah ibn Verga, who lived in Ocaña from 1488 to 1491 and is mentioned as one of the last Jewish tax-farmers to retain his office in the face of the administrative reforms, may have been identical with the Rabbi Judah ibn Verga, the famous astronomer and cabalist, who is portrayed by his young kinsman, R. Solomon ibn Verga, in his *Shebet Yehudah*. According to R. Solomon, R. Judah, by interceding with the Duke of Medina Sidonia and by his skill in the arts of magic, exculpated the Jews of Jerez de la Frontera of the charge that they had buried a *converso* in their cemetery. R. Judah was well known for his efforts to bring the *conversos* of Seville back into the Jewish fold and for his warnings to them to flee in due season from the doom that awaited them at the hands of the Inquisition. Yet the Catholic Monarchs did not hesitate to avail themselves of his services. When the Jews were expelled from Andalusia, R. Judah settled in Ocaña, where he found a kindred spirit in the rabbi of that city, R. Isaac de Leon, one of the last great Jewish scholars of Spain. R. Judah's kinsman, R. Solomon ibn Verga, who in his old age set down his reminiscences of the last phase of Jewish life in Spain in his *Shebet Yehudah*, was also esteemed by the authorities and the Jews. The aljamas delegated him to collect funds for the ransom of the Jewish captives taken in the capture of Málaga in 1487, whose interests he represented in his negotiations with the authorities. Some of the Jewish tax-farmers were members of the Caro, Arduziel, and Shoshan families

of Toledo, and Zemerro family of Seville, and other families famous in the spiritual history of the Jewish people.²¹

One Jew closely connected with the government at this time was R. Isaac Abravanel, who enjoyed a unique status.²² He came from an old Sevillian family. After the massacres of 1391, his ancestors emigrated to Portugal. During the reign of Alfonso V of Portugal, R. Isaac and his father engaged successfully in commerce and government finance. Isaac Abravanel was most prolific in exegetical, philosophical and propagandistic writings for the Jews of his day; he was learned in Torah and familiar with humanistic culture. His intimacy with the nobility of the highest rank was due not only to his financial dealings with them, but to the fact that they found him personally congenial. When Alfonso V died in 1481, the heir to the throne, John II, determined, like the Castilian rulers, to break the power of the nobles and to set up an absolutist regime. The nobles revolted, under the leadership of the king's brother-in-law, the duke of Braganca, and the latter's brother, the count of Faro, who was a friend of Abravanel. The duke of Braganca was tried and executed for treason. The count of Faro fled to Castile. Isaac Abravanel and his son-in-law Joseph Abravanel did likewise. The government of Castile, which had had a hand in the conspiracy, extended a warm welcome to the refugees. The two Abravanel were condemned to death, *in absentia*, in Portugal for their part in the revolt. In the introduction to his commentary on the Book of Joshua, R. Isaac asserts that he was persecuted by the king of Portugal without cause, for "there was no violence in my hands and no deceit on my lips." This statement, however, is incompatible with his methodical and zealous advocacy of republican principles in various passages in his works.

R. Isaac and Joseph Abravanel came to Castile in 1483, and at first resided in the province of Plasencia near the Portuguese frontier. Joseph Abravanel, a wealthy man who

farmed the taxes in the district of his domicile and on occasion acted as the personal business agent of the queen, lived in the city of Plasencia until the Expulsion. Isaac Abravanel entered the service of the rulers, but did not settle down in any one locality. The archives refer to his having lived in Alcalá de Henares in 1488 and in Guadalajara in 1491. His choice of localities may have been dictated by motives of friendship (R. Isaac Abohab, the Bienvenistes and other intellectuals then resided in Guadalajara) and not by business or administrative considerations, as neither of the cities in question was a commercial or administrative center. R. Isaac Abravanel farmed the taxes of important districts in the central and southern parts of Castile. His activities were not restricted to ordinary financial transactions; he served as the queen's private, business, and financial agent and loaned her vast sums for special political purposes (for example, he extended her a loan of 1,500,000 *maravedis* for carrying on the war with Granada). It seems that he had been able to smuggle a large part of his fortune out of Portugal.

The above description of Jews in the service of the State shows them to have been no less active in politics at this time than in earlier periods. On the contrary, the great ambitions which the Catholic Monarchs nurtured revived the inherited political talents of the Spanish Jews. Many Jews were no doubt persuaded that a powerful regime and a well-ordered administration were preferable to the anarchy which had prevailed for several years. In their view persecution of the *conversos* was a necessary political expedient for which there was even a certain justification. As for those men of culture, who had lost the belief that God watches over His chosen and persecuted people, they simply ignored their people's plight and devoted themselves wholeheartedly—as did the enlightened and sincere Christian officials—to their secular political duties under the guidance of their great rulers. Even a

man like Isaac Abravanel, whose faith and nationalist sentiments entitle him to rank with the best Jews of that age, was caught up in the magic circle of political science, which he had learned from his studies of Aristotle and other classical writers. His actions were not consistent with his theories. He was a confirmed republican in his views, and detested the royal regime and its rulers with "their abominations and their idols. Each of them does what is good in his own sight, and the whole land is filled with their violence." Abravanel believed that "every appointment and every post of responsibility, whether in the Jewish community or in the court of the Gentile kings, is something to be avoided and that those who do not avoid them will end by violating the Ten Commandments." But this was theory! In 1483, the very year that Abravanel came to Castile, the Inquisition inaugurated a permanent and well-planned campaign against the *conversos* and the Jews. All the Jews were exiled from Andalusia, and no room whatsoever was left for illusions about the domestic policy which was destined to bring utter ruin and disaster down upon them. Abravanel knew only too well what Christian extremism had done to the Jews. Since coming to Castile, he had followed each and every phase of the antisemitic policy with a heart full of apocalyptic hate and of faith in the same messianic prophecies which sustained the spirits of the simple and pious Jews. The same inherent inconsistency is seen in the attitude of the king and queen towards the Jews. They encouraged Jews to come to their court and enter their service without giving a thought to the fact of their Jewishness. Their attitude was determined not only by the administrative traditions or by their need of Jewish money, but by personal ties and connections as well. These Jews were entrusted with most important functions because they were zealous in their desire to serve the monarchs and because they had certain special abilities which their Christian colleagues lacked. If it were not for religious

considerations, the monarch would doubtless have bestowed even wider powers upon them. If a modern scholar were to limit his studies to the records of the secular administration at Simancas, he would be inclined to infer that the Catholic rulers were not at all hostile to the Jews. The private accounts of the royal household contain the names of Jewish artisans who were employed there then as in the best of times. But Jewish physicians were hardly admitted at all to the presence of royalty²³—an obviously intentional departure from the custom of their predecessors. The light-minded *converso* poets discussed in the previous chapter were also sent away from the court of Castile. But no *conversos* in high posts were dismissed—not even from the court of the fanatical queen.

In the Kingdom of Aragon, there were several *conversos* in Ferdinand's service whom the king himself had appointed to important posts. Alfonso de la Cavalleria and his role in bringing Ferdinand and Isabella together have already been discussed. From 1484 on, Alfonso is referred to by the title of vice-chancellor to the king. Moreover, he appears from the beginning of Ferdinand's reign as political counsellor to the king and as representative of the interests of the kingdom and its plans for introducing reforms into the municipality of Barcelona and other institutions. To some extent, he may also have supported the king's plan for establishing the Castilian Inquisition in Aragon. His views were regarded as important and decisive, and even the most highly placed men in the country felt obliged to reckon with them and to court his favor. His influence was apparent not only in Aragon, but also in the joint general policies of the Catholic Monarchs. A similar status was enjoyed by Gabriel Sánchez, the treasurer-general of Aragon, who was a grandson of Alazar Golluf, and by Luis de Santangel, chief comptroller (*Escribano de Ración*), who in turn was descended from the Chinillo family, which had been converted to Christianity at the time of the

Tortosa Disputation. Both these men, who were farsighted diplomats, encouraged Queen Isabella to further the plans of Christopher Columbus and loaned her the money for his expedition. They received the first letters written by Columbus on his famous voyage. Their relationships with their ancestral stock will be discussed below.²⁴

There were also Jewish agents and intellectuals at some of the courts of the nobles and the bishops. During the last few years before the Expulsion, there were still Jewish physicians, treasurers, tax collectors and lawyers in the service of the nobility. R. Abraham Zacuto carried on scientific research in astronomy for the bishop of Salamanca until 1480, and thereafter for the Grandmaster of the Order of the Knights of Alcantara. Municipalities still appointed Jewish physicians to official posts. In the city of Trujillo a Jew served as prosecuting attorney until 1484, when the government insisted on his being dismissed. The personal relationships between Jews and Christians of all classes seem to have been friendly.²⁵

FIRST STEPS TOWARD A SOLUTION OF THE JEWISH PROBLEM: REVOCATION OF THE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION OF THE ALJAMAS

The old traditionally favorable aspects of the Catholic Monarchs' Jewish policy were set aside little by little, and an anti-Jewish attitude became more pronounced. Soon after consolidating their political position, Ferdinand and Isabella decided to solve the *converso* problem along the lines proposed by the most extreme Christian fanatics, namely, to extirpate heresy and to take harsh measures against the Jews so as to render them incapable of influencing the Christian population. This new departure in religious and racial policy was not put into effect all at once or without preliminaries, but was developed step by step as the widespread anarchy was suppressed. Several weeks after the battle near Toro, where the sovereigns defeated their foreign and domes-

tic enemies, they promulgated, at a session of the Cortes held in April 1476 at Madrigal, the first sweeping edicts for judicial and administrative reforms in the State, including revocation of all the rights of the Jewish aljamas to exercise criminal jurisdiction.²⁶ The sovereigns thus confirmed and gave new validity to the edicts of 1380 and 1412, which had been annulled by the privileges of 1432. It was now realized that such Jewish rights were incompatible not only with the Christian religion, but with the new political concepts which impelled the sovereigns to deprive all other political bodies in the State of their rights of criminal jurisdiction

In that year the “Holy Hermandad” was organized as a popular association, but actually it was to serve as an instrument of the absolute monarchy. A revealing incident related by the chronicler Palencia shows how the *conversos* first realized that the rulers were hostile to them. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, in his efforts to maintain his independence, once more tried to win the support of the *conversos* for his own purposes. He pointed out to them that a union of all the popular forces would be detrimental to their interests, and that the founding of the Hermandad would mean for them ruin and destruction. The duke placed 400 *conversos* in the fortress of Seville to resist the queen’s forces; but such resistance was soon seen to be futile.²⁷

THE INQUISITION

BEGINNINGS OF THE INQUISITION IN SEVILLE AND ANDALUSIA

The king and queen visited the city of Seville in 1477. The time and place were considered opportune for opening the eyes of the rulers to the destructive effects of Jewish heresy: the clergy had tried in vain to persuade the *conversos* to repent. Alonso de Hojeda, head of the Dominican monastery of S. Pablo in Seville, “Fray Vicente the Second,” and others persuaded Ferdinand and Isabella that only the Inquisition could remedy the situation, since leading personalities had been infected with the plague of heresy, a plague that had spread to the local populace. The rulers concurred in this view and sent a report to Pope Sixtus IV on the spread of

heresy and its consequent incessant civil war. On November 1, 1478, the pope issued a bull investing Ferdinand and Isabella with extraordinary powers to appoint inquisitors in all parts of Castile. No details are available concerning the course of the negotiations, which were doubtless continued for two years thereafter.¹

At a session of the Cortes held in Toledo in May 1480, the sovereigns included, among their various reforms, the re-enactment of the law of 1412, which provided for segregating Jews and Moslems from Christians, and for the Jews' removal from all localities to separate quarters within two years. By means of this legislation the Christian extremists achieved an objective they had long cherished. On this occasion, moreover, they achieved it in its entirety, and in an orderly and legal manner at that. The intent of the law was to make it impossible for the Jews to exert any influence upon the *conversos*²

On September 27, 1480, the king and queen appointed two Dominican friars as inquisitors for their entire realm.³ The friars inaugurated their activities in Seville in January 1481. The author of the *Shebet Yehudah* asserts that R. Judah ibn Verga foresaw all that was to happen even before the Inquisition began to function. He placed three pairs of doves in his window. One pair, which was plucked and slaughtered, bore a label on their necks which read: "These will be the *anussim* (forced converts), who will be the last to flee." The second pair of doves were plucked, but alive. Concerning these R. Judah said: "These will be the middle ones." With regard to the pair which were alive and unplucked, he wrote: "These will be the first to flee." "But they would not listen and so were brought low."

The inquisitors, who were simple monks, sent orders to the highest Andalusian nobility and to the municipalities of that province, calling upon them to deliver up the *conversos* who had fled from Seville and taken refuge with them. Wealthy

men and notables of Seville—municipal councillors and jurists—were arrested and tried by the inquisitors with the aid of jurists. The records of these trials have not been preserved; but it may fairly be assumed that the proceedings were conducted in the spirit of the principles later formulated and adopted by Torquemada. The fanatics of Seville were ruthless in their judgments, and sought to justify their severity by pointing out that many of the *conversos* had fled; that they were very influential; and that they were preparing to rise in revolt: hence the need for strong measures. The ecclesiastical judges of Seville doubtless gathered a great deal of evidence to prove that most of the local *conversos* actually did judaize. Within a few weeks of the Inquisition's establishment, six men and women were executed in a single day, and some days later the same fate befell three notables of Seville who bore the Jewish patronymics of Ben Shoshan, Ben Adoba and Abulafia. The *conversos* concealed weapons in their homes and prepared to put up an active resistance, but by that time the old civil-war tactics were outmoded.

In August, 1481, an epidemic of the plague broke out in Seville, and the judges realized that there was a need for leniency. Many *conversos* were permitted to leave the city after depositing pledges of money which were, of course, never redeemed. These *conversos* found refuge with nobles in Andalusia, and thence some migrated to the overseas Moslem countries with the intention of "living as Jews, such as they actually were." Others went to Portugal and to Rome. Some *conversos*, however, returned to Seville, where the inquisitors were lenient towards them, re-admitting them to the Church after they had performed certain penances in public. The inquisitors themselves left the city for a short time for fear of the plague. But, while temporarily domiciled in a small place called Aracena, they had no fewer than twenty-two persons there burned to death in a mass execution. Before

the year was out they returned to Seville and continued to function there. The inquisitors sent emissaries to Jerez de la Frontera where, despite the protests of the municipal authorities, they confiscated the property of *conversos*, including that of municipal-tax-farmers, who had fled from the town.

An Andalusian historian, the priest Andrés Bernáldez, who must have seen the records of the Inquisition, gloatingly reports that in Seville it burnt 750 men and women at the stake in the years of 1481–1488, and that it took over 5,000 *conversos* back into the Christian fold after imposing various penalties upon them. Apart from the *conversos* who ran away, almost the same number must have remained loyal to Judaism in that city. For, most of those who “repented” and were “reconciled” with the Church did so as a means of being able to practice the Jewish rites in secret, as they had previously done. Bernáldez sums up the situation as follows: the confessions made by the *conversos* of Seville show that all of them were Jews; and from their statements, a similar inference can be drawn in regard to the *conversos* of Cordova, Toledo, Burgos, Segovia, and all the rest of Spain.

All of them [continues Bernáldez] were Jews, and clung to their hope, like the Israelites in Egypt, who suffered many blows at the hands of the Egyptians and yet believed that God would lead them out from the midst of them, as He did with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. So, too, the *conversos* looked upon the Christians as Egyptians or worse, and believed that God had them in His keeping and preserved them as by a miracle. They held steadfastly to their faith that God would guide and remember them and bring them out from the midst of the Christians and lead them to the Holy and Promised Land. The Inquisition proposed to destroy both their belief and the believers. “The fire has been

kindled, and it will burn until not one of them is left alive.”⁴

COORDINATION OF THE INQUISITION IN ARAGON AND CASTILE

At the same time Ferdinand began to reorganize and reactivate in his own kingdom tribunals of the Inquisition which were already in existence. The papal Inquisition was at a low ebb in Aragon, and had only one active tribunal there, that of Valencia (the proceedings of which in the 1460's have been described above). In 1481, when the Inquisition committed its first atrocities in Seville, Ferdinand turned his attention to the inquisitional activity in Valencia and appointed inquisitors for other parts of his kingdom who functioned with exceptional zeal. The fragmentary records from these years (only those from Valencia have survived) show that a relatively tolerant policy, according to the ideas of those times, was still in effect there. As required by the rules of the Inquisition, the inquisitors inaugurated their activities in Valencia by promulgating an “Edict of Grace” which promised that all who wished to confess their sins would be received in private, and in May 1482 extended the period for which the edict was valid by an additional month. As early as January 1482, the king himself, at the urging of his controller, the *converso* Luis de Santangel, wrote to the inquisitor in Valencia asking him to receive the confession of a certain *converso*) compassionately and to be lenient in his penalties. At that time the king too seems to have inclined toward clemency.

Such cases recurred in the following years, even after Torquemada's strict regulations had been officially confirmed. Yet generally speaking, there was a tendency toward increased severity, and the harsh measures aroused resistance. The records for the year 1482 contain vague and contradictory references to *converso* intentions to assassinate the inquisitor in Valencia. In 1482 and 1483 the *conversos* of An-

dalusia and Valencia submitted their grievances to the papal court in Rome, claiming that the inquisitors interrogated and sentenced them without due process of law, cruelly tortured them, accepted the testimony of unreliable witnesses, confined the accused in the prisons of the secular authorities, and had no motive other than to enrich themselves and to bring death and ruin upon innocent people. Sixtus IV tried to intervene in behalf of the *conversos*. He called for the dismissal of the most zealous inquisitors, and ordered the rest to submit to the authority of the bishops. The pope furthermore directed that the trials should be conducted in a proper legal manner, with the accused having the right of appeal to his own court. Penitents were to be allowed to confess before their trials began and their penances were to be performed in private.

The Spanish sovereigns were indignant over the pope's demands. In May 1482, Ferdinand sent a sharp protest to Rome, declaring he had no intention of acceding to the pope's demands, and that the inquisitors whom the pope had pronounced unfit for their office had acted in a perfectly legal manner and were for that very reason unacceptable to the *conversos*. Ferdinand warned the pope that he would tolerate no interference with his inquisitors. It was essential for the glory of God and the honor of the Christian religion that the inquisitors should be appointed by the king. Otherwise, the results would not be satisfactory. The king pointed out that until the secular authorities had intervened in the affairs of the Inquisition, heresy had spread so far and so wide that many ostensible Christians were in fact not conforming either to the Christian doctrine or to that of any other religion. A certain *converso* from Valencia, who participated in submitting the grievances to the pope, was arrested by order of the king. In August 1483, despite the protest of the Spanish monarchs, Pope Sixtus IV sent letters of absolution to the accused *conversos* and directed that in certain cases

confessions and abjurations were to be accepted in private. Yet, only a few weeks later the political scales were tipped in favor of the fanatics.⁵

EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM ANDALUSIA

The year 1483 marked a new phase in the liquidation of Spanish Jewry. On January 1 of that year the Inquisition issued an edict for the expulsion of all Jews from the archbishopric of Seville and the bishopric of Cordova,⁶ in other words, from the entire province of Andalusia. The original text of this edict is not extant; but the edict of 1492 for the expulsion of the Jews from the whole of Spain refers to the edict for partial expulsion promulgated nine years previously, and mentions the fact that it was issued by the government because there was only one way of ridding the country of Jewish influence: by expulsion. True, the expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia alone had been deemed sufficient at the time because their influence was strongest in that area. There are other indications that a kind of segregated Jewish enclave in the northern part of the country was then under consideration. The idea of total expulsion was thus mooted as early as 1483, but was not seriously entertained for the time being either for humanitarian reasons or owing to the war with Granada. Though the edict of 1492 attributes the order for the expulsion from Andalusia to the government, it is obvious that it was promulgated on behalf of the Inquisition. Only one month was allowed for preparations for departure; whether or not this period was extended is not known. Be that as it may, it is a fact that all the Jews left the city of Seville in the course of 1483. The only records available on the negotiations which took place between the inquisitors and the government regarding an extension of the period allowed for departure, comes from the Jewish community of Jerez de la Frontera, which was the nearest to the southern frontier. In January 1484, the king gave orders to

postpone the expulsion from Jerez de la Frontera for an additional six months. Within a short time all the Jews left that city as well. Thereafter only individual Jews could visit the forbidden areas, provided that they had special permits from the Inquisition. There can be no question that the inquisitors had the last word in deciding on the expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia.

THE APPOINTMENT OF TORQUEMADA AS GRAND INQUISITOR. ORGANIZATION AND CHARACTER OF THE NEW SPANISH INQUISITION

In the autumn of 1483, Thomas de Torquemada, prior of the Dominican monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia and confessor to the queen, was appointed by the Catholic Monarchs and the pope inquisitor general for all territories under the rule of Ferdinand and Isabella. Torquemada had been an inquisitor since the previous year, and it is probable that he may have been among the proponents of the idea of expelling the Jews from Andalusia.⁷ As inquisitor general, he presided over the Consejo de la Suprema y General Inquisición (Supreme Council of the Inquisition) which, like all other central administrative bodies in Castile, had been founded by the Catholic Monarchs.

In the years that followed, Torquemada issued to the examining judges instructions based on the principles of the old papal Inquisition. All courts of the Inquisition were to consist of two examining judges, an assessor (legal adviser), a guard (*alguacil*), a *fiscal* (prosecuting attorney) and notaries, all of whom were in the service of the government and received fixed salaries. All earlier papal edicts in favor of the *conversos* were revoked. In all localities where new tribunals were set up, it was the duty of the inquisitors to issue an "Edict of Grace" to the effect that voluntary confessions would be accepted in the course of the following thirty or forty days. The inquisitors were authorized to impose eccle-

siastical penalties, both mild and severe, and money fines as well, at their discretion. Reconciliation with the Church in private was permissible only if the transgression had not already become known in public. In these respects Torquemada did nothing more than give a new lease on life to old regulations. This applies as well to other rules regulating the conduct of trials by the Inquisition, such as receiving testimony in the absence of the defendant, torture of accused who made only partial confessions, and the extreme penalty of “turning over condemned persons to the secular arm” (which meant execution at the stake), and confiscation of property.

The Spanish Inquisition, like the papal Inquisition of the Middle Ages, was a judicial institution conducted in accordance with fixed and explicit rules. But the people of Castile were not accustomed to such procedures, and enlightened humanists protested against the revival of a barbaric institution, which had originally been established in a different and far more primitive spiritual climate. The form of the renewed regulations and their interpretation by Torquemada were also open to criticism on the ground that much scope was thereby left for arbitrary action on the part of the inquisitors, especially in the weighing of testimonial evidence. The general tactics of the Inquisition were not uniform; and its actions, as will presently appear, were determined by local needs and political considerations. In some instances the tribunal proceeded in an orderly and moderate manner, while in others the methods employed were more like brutal assaults by soldiers than the conduct of a court of justice. But the critics were soon silenced. After a thirty-years’ controversy, the program of the extremists, formulated initially by the mendicant friars, prevailed over the approach of the moderates.

Established as an ecclesiastical institution, the Spanish Inquisition, like the general Inquisition before it, was subject to the approval of the pope. It was intended to serve as the

means for solving a specific religious and social problem within the framework of the religious policy of a particular country. It thereby became a political institution even though its purely religious character was not obscured. It was Torquemada who guided this politics of religion from 1483 to 1492 towards its objective: the destruction of Spanish Jewry. His critical decisions could have been implemented only with the approval of the king and queen. The sovereigns had not, however, summoned Torquemada from his monastic cell in order to consult with him on secular policies; it was religious fanaticism that placed the secular arm of the government at the service of this friar and forced it to ignore all sound political and economic considerations. Cynics sneered that the State's only object was to enrich itself by confiscating the *conversos'* property. But in truth, no prudent regime could have afforded to overlook the harm done to the public weal by the persecutions. Large commercial centers like Seville and Barcelona were totally ruined by the Inquisition, and many medium-sized and small towns in the interior of the country were depopulated by the *converso* trials and the expulsion of the Jews. As a matter of fact, the king and queen were always short of funds, while huge sums were required for carrying on the war with Granada. Nevertheless, the sovereigns themselves took the part of several notables who were suspected of heresy and thus saved the fortunes of the accused. We have here no simple act of pillage. Slanderers and rumor-mongers unfairly attempted to distinguish between the attitudes of the proud and bigoted Isabella and the kindly Ferdinand, who was said to have Jewish blood in his veins. Indeed, the persecuted individuals themselves may have tried to discern such differences. There were no such differences. Castile, and especially Andalusia, was the birthplace of the Spanish Inquisition. From Seville, the Inquisition penetrated step by step into the towns of central Castile; and from there it went into the Kingdom of Aragon.

Castile and Aragon were never so unified or so well coordinated in internal policy as in the sphere of the Inquisition during these ten years.

THE INQUISITION IN CIUDAD REAL AND GUADALUPE

In the latter half of 1483, the Inquisition set up a special tribunal in the city of Ciudad Real (Villareal). This small and thriving town on the highway from Andalusia to Toledo, which was granted municipal rights in the early part of the fifteenth century, was well-known as a center of Jewish influence. During the civil war that raged between the old and new Christians in Toledo, similar disorders had broken out in Ciudad Real. The Inquisition held trials there in 1473, and several *conversos* were at that time sentenced to die at the stake.

Torquemada's men reported a persistent rumor that a number of nominal Christians in Ciudad Real were actually practicing the Jewish religion. Complete original records of the early Inquisition trials held in Ciudad Real enable us to trace all the developments. In accordance with the prescribed procedure, the Inquisition began with a show of leniency by issuing a thirty-day "Edict of Grace" and then extending the period. All who were able to flee did so. The others confessed their sins, but mostly in a desultory and equivocal manner. The first public "Act of Faith" (*actus fidei*) took place on November 16, 1483, with a solemn abjuration by the *conversos*, but no executions. But in the one month of February 1484, thirty-four persons were burned alive. Though this naturally struck terror in the hearts of the people of the little town, it also evoked a demonstration of the enormous power of the Jewish faith. The condemned individuals were burned "alive" because they chose to die with the Jewish credo on their lips. They rejected the Christian faith to the very last though by accepting it they would have had the right to die by the less painful method of strangling before their bodies were burned.

The one and only accusation made against them was their practice of the Jewish religion.

A typical instance of this kind was the case of a simple woman by the name of María González, who was known as La Panpana, after the name of her husband, Juan Panpan. In 1473–1474 a certain *converso* confessed under judicial torture that Panpan, a linen merchant, supplied the *conversos* with meat prepared according to the Jewish rite. Panpan fled the city and in February 1484 was sentenced *in absentia* as a Jew who observed all the Jewish practices. His wife applied in October 1483 for “reconciliation” with the Church. Maria admitted that she had kept some of the Jewish commandments, but only casually and to please her husband. Several weeks later, however, the prosecuting attorney placed the woman on trial on the ground that her confession had not been complete. It transpired that she had listened to Jewish prayers as Christians listen to mass; that she had observed the Sabbath as her day of rest; that she wore clean shifts and festive garments on that day; and that she celebrated the Jewish festivals. She observed the *hadash* ceremony for her children as was the Jewish custom with newborn infants, and brought them up in the Mosaic religion. Witnesses corroborated the charge that on the Sabbath, the Panpan home was clean and quiet, but that on Sunday the woman and her three daughters worked from early morning at the spindle in order to earn the family livelihood. The woman apologized to the judges and assured them that she was a good Catholic and that her confession was true, though there were some things she had forgotten to mention. It was only by chance, she said, that she had heard her husband—and no one else—recite Jewish prayers. The *hadash* ceremony had been arranged by her husband and not by her. Whatever she had done had been done under compulsion by her husband. After brief deliberations—the records of this trial, as of most trials in those days, fill only a thin notebook—the judges

stated their conclusion that the accused had practiced all the Jewish rites of her own free will, as far as she was able, and not under duress. She was therefore delivered up for execution, with other condemned prisoners, to the royal executioner in the town.

Hundreds of subsequent trials, in this and other towns, were conducted in the same manner. The judges based their sentences on the testimony of only a few witnesses, and their decisions were certainly inspired by ulterior motives. In Ciudad Real their purpose was to kill and destroy. After they had complied with the formalities, and the confessions of the accused had been discredited, the judges made no further attempts to bring the “lost sheep” back into the Christian fold. But the humble La Panpana triumphed over her judges. Like practically all *conversos*, Maria had at first denied that she was a Jewess at heart; but when her confession was disproved she underwent martyrdom as a true daughter of Israel. Had she been allowed to live, she would certainly have been steadfast in her Jewish faith. This was true of most of the *conversos* of Ciudad Real—not only of the condemned but of those who escaped with mild penalties.

In Ciudad Real the *conversos* (some of whom, as in Seville, had Jewish surnames, such as Abencerraje or Abudarme) constituted a kind of organized Jewish community. Panpan was their *shohet*, while another *converso* was called “rabbi” and “confessor.” They had Jewish prayer books in the Castilian language, which contained the *Shema*, the *Amida*, and the “dream prayer” (“Lord of the Universe, I am Thine and my dreams are Thine,” etc.) in the traditional Jewish versions. Among the condemned prisoners were two municipal councillors (*regidores*), two notaries, a physician, and two women whose husband had the degree of *bachiller*. Most of the others came from the humbler ranks of the *conversos*, like shopkeepers and, for the most part, craftsmen. Within the space of less than two years, the *converso* community of Ciudad Real was almost destroyed, and the few who were left

were persecuted by the Inquisition for decades on end.⁸

In the town of Guadalupe, near a famous monastery of the Order of St. Jerome, where there was a small Jewish community, the Inquisition set up a temporary tribunal, as in Ciudad Real. Within a single twelvemonth fifty-two *conversos* were burned at the stake for their attachment to Judaism; forty-eight *converso* corpses were exhumed from their graves and burned at the stake; and twenty-five *conversos* who had fled were burned in effigy, while milder penalties were imposed upon many others.⁹ In Guadalupe the *conversos* were also organized in a kind of community. They lived in a street of their own, and in the periods of tolerance and civil war were often visited on the Sabbaths by Christians who were curious about Jewish customs. A Jew named Moses Arovas would occasionally come from Trujillo, a neighboring town, and would usually stay in the home of a *converso* woman. This woman also stayed in his home when she went to Trujillo. Another Jew, from Medellin, ate meat in her home on Good Friday. Her late husband had been a butcher. Her son went to Salamanca and there lived as a Jew. When he was baptized, on the day of his birth, the woman had hastily wiped away the chrism from his forehead; and when her husband brought home a crucifix she trampled on it and threw it down the privy. This woman's own daughter testified against her, and she had therefore no choice but to admit everything. Threatened with torture, she herself testified against others.¹⁰

Another woman, unable to contain herself, burst out with the remark that it was a shame there were not ten "good *conversos*" (who were still faithful to Judaism) left in Guadalupe, meaning that most had rejoined the Church. When she overheard other women talking about the Inquisition in the street, she ran out of her house and screamed: "It is good that we are persecuted even unto death! When these times pass, other times will come." She asked passers-by to box her ears and pinched and slapped herself. Her sister had escaped

to "Judaëa" (the Holy Land) and she herself still did not despair of joining her and all other *conversos* who had reverted to Judaism.¹¹

One of the accused was found in possession of a booklet containing a prayer in Spanish for deliverance from affliction and imprisonment. (This booklet was attached to the court records as an exhibit.) The man claimed that the booklet had been given him by a Jew from Cordova. Its text clearly indicates its derivation from a Hebrew original.¹² When *conversos* were arrested, they often took such prayers with them to the prisons of the Inquisition. Some time later a certain *beata* * from Ocaña was caught with a similar booklet. In addition to a Jewish prayer, however, this booklet contained some Christian material and peculiar and incoherent religious expressions which were neither Christian nor Jewish in origin. Being unable to determine the exact nature of this booklet, though the peculiar additions to the Jewish prayer were obviously intended to mislead the inquisitors, the judges released the nun.

At Guadalupe something new was revealed: *conversos* had been entering monasteries so as to be able to practice the Jewish religion with greater safety. The execution of one such monk, Diego de Marchena by name, created a great sensation at the time. In agreement with Torquemada, the monks of the Order of St. Jerome then decided to hold investigations in all their monasteries, and to admit no more new Christians to their Order. The head of the Order, Fray Rodrigo de Orense, who protested against the latter measure as un-Christian, was removed from his office with certain penances.¹³

THE INQUISITION IN TOLEDO

In May 1485, the inquisitors moved their court to Toledo.¹⁴ The establishment of the new Inquisition in the old capital of

* The Spanish *beatae*, like the Beguines in Flanders, led a strict religious life without taking any special monastic vows.

Christian Spain had probably been postponed up to that time for weighty political reasons. A spirit of tolerance prevailed in Toledo. The local *conversos* were still very influential and were making preparations to revolt. On May 24, 1485, the inquisitors followed their customary procedure of proclaiming a forty-days' "period of grace," and called upon the *conversos* to come and confess their sins. Two weeks passed without a single response to the announcement. According to a contemporary report, the *conversos* planned to assassinate the inquisitors "and the other gentlemen and knights and the whole Christian population" during the religious procession on Corpus Christi Day. The city gates and the tower of the principal church were to have been seized, and the city itself made to revolt against the king. But in Toledo, as previously in Seville, the *conversos* failed to carry out their design. The conspiracy was discovered on the eve of the revolt. The mayor of Toledo, Corregidor Gomez Manrique, a cultured poet and statesman, who had expressed his *anti-converso* sentiments in some of his poems, rendered all possible assistance to the inquisitors. He ordered the arrest and hanging of several *conversos*, including *bachiller* de la Torre, who may have been related to the two brothers who were killed in the uprising of 1467. At the posthumous trial, held by the inquisitors, de la Torre's adherence to Judaism was proven by the testimony of Jewish witnesses.

In spite of the conspiracy, however, the inquisitors did not hesitate to extend the "period of grace" by ninety days. They compelled the rabbis to announce in the synagogues that all Jews who were aware of Jewish practices by *con-versos* were duty bound, on pain of excommunication and the ban, to testify to that effect before the court of the Inquisition. This method of obtaining testimony from Jews, though criticized by many men of good sense, was employed by all the tribunals of the new Inquisition from the day it was established until the Edict of Expulsion was issued. Important information could be obtained from Jews like rabbis, *shohatim*, sex-

tons, and such others. The Jews were still in so much dread of the ban that those who had such knowledge came forward to testify.

Not all were prudent when interrogated by the Christian judges. In some cases Jews denounced their *converso* enemies out of malice. A contemporary Christian historian of Toledo tells about Jews who bore false witness against *conversos* and were sentenced to death by stoning. A Jewish chronicler also relates that:

before the Expulsion, the king of Spain persecuted the *anussim* and investigated their conscience, for they kept some of the Jewish commandments in secret; and in every town he forced the Jews to preach in the synagogues and to put under the ban all who knew of any forced convert that he had given oil for illumination or money for any other purpose, to reveal the matter. The preachers preached in the synagogue in the presence of the king's scribes and adjured the people under oath to tell what they knew, for it was the king's wish that such matters be reported; hence those who did not reveal the names of such converts would be excommunicated. Alas, the sword of these bans consumed the Spanish (Jews), who were beset by afflictions and evils wherever they went.

ANTI-JEWISH PROPAGANDA IN CASTILE

As the inquisitors neared the capital of Castile, anti-Jewishness flared up in the interior of the country. A certain Dominican friar by the name of Antonio de la Peña, from Torquemada's monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia, began in March 1485 to preach anti-Jewish sermons in his monastery as well as in the city and its environs. This man, who was appointed by the inquisitors of Toledo several months later to gather evidence of *converso* guilt, declared that he "would set up his pulpit in the Jewish quarter and cause such a com-

motion that the whole city would not be able to remedy the matter.” Peña warned the Christians that “it they did not light a bonfire on the hill, the wolves would not be frightened off.” His weeping and sobbing in the pulpit so excited his congregation that the simple folk were moved to tears and the whole city was in a ferment. Some of his hearers were ready to start ringing the church bells as a signal for looting the Jewish quarter. All this information is derived from a letter of complaint written by the powerful Don Abraham Seneor of Segovia to the king’s supreme court at Valladolid. From similar complaints it appears that the *alcalde* of Segovia forbade the baking of *matzoth* in the municipal ovens, as was the annual custom. The Jews were in a quandary, as the Passover festival was close at hand. The king’s court was composed of judges who scorned such fanaticism. They sent an intelligent official to Segovia in the name of the king and queen with instructions to inquire into the matter and to bring the accused, who had been arrested, to Valladolid. But it seems that the royal emissary was powerless, and the friends of the inquisitors did as they pleased.¹⁵

References are found in the records for August and September of the same year to an apostate Jew by the name of Maestre Juan de Talavera, who instigated “lawsuits, disputations and claims” against individual Jews and Jewish communities in Castile. The apostate’s brother, a Jew named Yuce Talavera, who was a resident of Segovia, complained to the king’s court that the local *aljama* was plotting to assassinate or assault the apostate, as circumstances permitted, and that the *aljama* had produced witnesses who gave false testimony about him. Yuce alleged that the Jews had caused the deaths of three apostates the previous year in a similar manner. Now, the informer claimed, he went in fear of his own life because the Jews felt absolutely justified in killing anyone who revealed their secrets. Having been deprived of their powers of jurisdiction in criminal cases, the Jews in-

tended to produce witnesses to testify falsely that he had violated his oath.

The decision handed down by the king's court in the case of Yuce de Talavera and other documents indicate that Don Abraham Seneor did, in fact, bring on behalf of the Jewish communities of Castile several suits against Maestre Juan de Talavera, charging him with engaging in magic rituals. Don Abraham Seneor also instituted court proceedings on his own behalf against several Jews who had sided with the apostate. In this affair Don Abraham had the assistance of some of the municipal officials of Segovia, who sent the accused to prison. No information is available about the upshot of the affair nor about the particulars of the apostate's designs.¹⁶ In any event, these records testify to the growing religious ferment of the time.

Another indication that the royal court of law at Valladolid responded passively to religious offenses is evident from an incident that occurred late in 1485. In Zamora, R. Saul Saba, brother of R. Abraham Saba—a well-known cabalist preacher, author of *Zeror ha-Mor* and other works—was condemned to death by the municipal court. R. Abraham Saba appealed against the verdict of the court. The reason for the death sentence is not known. The records before us show that the opinion of the rabbi and *dayan* of Zamora, R. Samuel Valenci, who was one of the greatest rabbis of the Expulsion period, influenced the court in arriving at its decision. The accused, for his part, testified that R. Samuel had taught Judaism and given money to a *converso* from Cordova, who had thoroughly repented of his apostasy and was known by his Jewish name of R. Meir Araye. R. Samuel sought protection against the hostility and threats that hung over him in Zamora by appealing to the king's court at Valladolid to place him on trial. The judges assigned him a house in the Jewish quarter of Valladolid and instructed him to remain there until their verdict was given. There is no record of the court's decisions,

but it is known that R. Samuel Valenci died a natural death shortly before the Expulsion and that he was then holding the rabbinical office in Zamora. The judges of the king's court probably buried the case in their files and refrained from bringing it to the attention of the inquisitors.¹⁷

THE INQUISITION AND THE CONVERSOS IN THE VICINITY OF TOLEDO

In the meantime, the Inquisition had been very active in Toledo.¹⁸ The first "Act of Faith" took place there on February 12, 1486, when 750 men and women from seven parishes of the city were led in a procession through the streets, sentenced to various penances and fined up to one-fifth of their fortunes, which sums were placed in the fund for prosecuting the war with Granada. Among those who were punished in this way were several local notables. A similar procedure was followed on April 2, 1486, when the number of penitents, coming from six parishes, reached about 900. On June 11, a third "Act of Faith" was staged for 750 other men and women. Then *conversos* residing in the vicinity of Toledo were summoned to court. Executions of these *conversos* began in August 1486, when on two successive days, twenty-seven martyrs were burned alive; in May 1487, the number of executions was twenty-three; in July 1488, it was forty, and in May 1490, twenty-two. Between 1486 and 1490, 4,850 *conversos* were reconciled with the Church in the whole province of Toledo. In the city of Toledo itself the number of such penitents was 2,400 in the year 1486. It therefore appears that, apart from the small Jewish community of Toledo, several thousand *conversos* in that city were still attached to the Jews by ties of origin, belief and practice.

It is regrettable that their confessions were not preserved in the archives, as such statements would doubtless have revealed the nature of their religious beliefs. Records of trials were preserved only when the confessions were deemed un-

satisfactory. The data gathered by the present writer from such records and the material quoted from them may require to be supplemented after more comprehensive and detailed studies have been made. Moreover, the nature of the material is such that it does not yield all the necessary data about the tactics of the Toledan Inquisition. The fact that the number of "penitents" was large and of the condemned relatively small is an indication that, in general, the Christians of Toledo who demanded the utmost possible toleration for the *conversos* were very influential. It is hardly possible that the thousands who made confessions in the course of a few weeks or even of a few years should have observed the Jewish practices only inadvertently, or that they were suddenly transformed into fervent Christians when appearing before the ecclesiastical judges. The clemency shown them can have been dictated only by political considerations. The *conversos* wielded very considerable influence; they were an essential element of the population; and the confiscated part of their fortunes could be used without annihilating the *conversos* themselves. As the Inquisition neared the centers of culture, opposition to its fanatical aims increased. Though there were *converso* intellectuals and municipal officials among the martyrs of Toledo, no very distinguished personalities were ever placed on trial by the Inquisition in that city. As we shall see, it was on behalf of such *conversos* that the king and queen intervened with the request that it be made possible for them to return to the Church without publicity.

In the trials of the Inquisition in Toledo,¹⁹ to which the writer was able to give rather close study, two different types of defendants can be distinguished, namely, men of education and simple artisans. The educated *converso* had no strong ties with Judaism. The heresy inquisitors were therefore inclined to be lenient with them, though there were times when they were disappointed. Modern authorities on Spain have evinced keen interest in the trial of Alvaro de Montalvan, the father-

in-law of the poet Fernando de Rojas, author of *La Celestina*, the first Spanish play ever written. Alvaro de Montalvan was condemned by the Inquisition only in 1526, though he had been tried by an ecclesiastical court forty years previously, when the inquisitors had had the bones of his parents exhumed and burned. Alvaro's sisters had confessed to the sin of practicing Jewish rites and had been forgiven. At the time, after admitting some of his transgressions, Alvaro himself was acquitted by the inquisitors. He had a Jewish mistress, bought meat from a Jewish butcher, attended Jewish houses of worship, visited the Jews in their booths on Succoth, ate their *matzoth*, and played dice with them. He had even made some skeptical remarks about the immortality of the soul. His relatives reproached him for reverting to Christianity.

Another interesting case was that of the Lucena family, which was headed by Maestre Martin de Lucena. The author of *Shebet Yehudah* refers to him respectfully as "a great scholar of our seed," and describes him as being well disposed towards his oppressed people. His son, Juan de Lucena, who was one of the first printers in Spain, printed Hebrew books and sold them abroad. After the massacres of 1467 (*el robo de la Madalena*) he left Toledo with his wife and six daughters and settled in Seville. There his wife died, and his daughters were concealed for a time in the home of some *conversos* who still adhered to Judaism.

In August 1481, he was denounced to the Inquisition as a man who had read many books and was in the habit of making scurrilous jests at the expense of Christianity. He had asked people, so the allegation continued, not to address him by the courtesy title of *Merced* "for," he said, "I am nothing but a Jewish donkey." In the meantime, he returned to Toledo with his daughters and established a Hebrew printing press there and in the neighboring village of Montalvan, where the *conversos* of Toledo had found a refuge. On learning that the Inquisition was very active in Seville, he fled to

Rome. Other members of his family went to Portugal. His daughters, who had remained behind in Montalvan, were summoned to appear before the inquisitors of Toledo in 1485. Working men employed in Lucena's printing press informed Fray Antonio de la Peña (see page 340) concerning the way his daughters lived. According to these witnesses, they observed the Sabbath, prepared their meat as prescribed by the Jewish dietary laws and refrained from food and drink on the Fast of Esther and on days when their friends were ill or gave birth. They read their prayers from a Judeo-Spanish prayer book, turning their faces to the wall as they did so. The prayer book in question was given into the keeping of Fray Antonio. In spite of all such disclosures, these cultured ladies were allowed to "repent" with only the customary penances imposed by the inquisitors.

Many years later other judges discovered that their predecessors had been misled. One of the ladies, Doña Leonor, who in 1510 was living in Lisbon, wrote to her sister Teresa, who remained in Toledo, a frankly worded letter: "You say," wrote Doña Leonor, "that you have reverted to your former status. God alone knows how this grieves me. God (*El*) be praised for everything! Had you at least been here with me, you would not have relapsed." Concerning the death of her son she wrote: "Since my son died, I have lived a living death. Four or five years ago we fled from death, yet he died in Lisbon." This letter fell into the hands of the Inquisition, but Doña Teresa again escaped its clutches. In 1530, she was brought to trial once more and sentenced to perpetual imprisonment; but she was released, upon payment of a fine, a few years later. It was said of her that despite everything, she continued to practice the Jewish religion until she died at a ripe old age in 1545.²⁰ How different was her fate from the doom of the humble Jewish woman of Ciudad Real, whose story has been told above! Why were Lucena's daughters acquitted in 1485? Because they were very young? Because

they were rich and educated? Or because the Toledan Inquisition pursued certain devious tactics of its own?

Still another example of what happened to *conversos* is the trial of Juan de Pineda, a commander of the Order of the Knights of Santiago and for a time the emissary of the head of that Order at the papal court, who resided in Toledo during the last years of his life. How his rise to eminence came about is not known. Like the poet Antonio de Montoro, he came from a poor *converso* family in Cordova. In his birthplace he was known as Juan de Baena. Like his brother, who was received back into the Church by the Inquisition, he began his career as a tailor. His mother and sister, in the company of other *conversos*, had to do penance in Cordova in 1486. In the same year some of his friends declared themselves willing to testify that he lived a good Christian life, but the prosecutor-general produced other witnesses who told some very curious stories about the accused. In 1464 or thereabouts, according to these witnesses, when the Turks were at war with Pope Pius II, this tailor, then known as Juan de Baena, had remarked to one of his neighbors:

You do not know who the Turk is. If God will favor us, that is, *conversos*, the Turk will be in Castile within a year and a half. You *conversos* from Ciudad Real and beyond to the north have become too Christianized and do not know what you live by; for the Turk is called the Destroyer of Christianity and the Defender of the Jewish Faith. He is the Messiah whose coming is predicted by the Jewish Bible.

These statements were made at a time when a *converso* artisan had been sentenced to death and executed (see above p. 299). A few days later, when Juan de Baena was engaged in conversation with his brother and brother-in-law, one of the three men was overheard to say: "God grant that our souls may go where the soul of Juan de Madrid (the martyred artisan) is going." Then all fell silent. The execution of the

martyred *converso* was the signal for the outbreak of a war between the old and new Christians. It was rumored that Juan de Baena had concealed his wealth and was preparing to fight on the side of the *conversos*. Some years later, about 1473, after the accused, under the name of Juan de Pineda, had risen to the rank of a Commander of the Order of the Knights of Santiago, he told a certain Christian in Segovia that “in land of Judaea,” the Jews were good men, who were granted salvation through their Torah and they also had prophets, because they had had no hand in the death of Jesus of Nazareth. It was in 1473, also, at the time of the massacre of *conversos* in Cordova, that Pineda was alleged to have said in Cordova that the Turk would come and enhance the prestige of the Law of Moses. Some years before his trial he was said to have made other sympathetic remarks about the *conversos* to the effect that, despite all their great sins, they were still worthy of being received as “penitents” by the Church.

At his trial Juan reminded the judges of all his pro-Christian activities since that time: he had been entrusted with important functions by Henry IV, by the archbishop of Toledo (Don Alfonso Carrillo), and by the head of the Order of Santiago, Don Juan Pacheco, whose animosity towards the *conversos* was very well known; the papal court in Rome had invested him with titles of nobility and assigned him important tasks; sincere Christian motives had prompted him to send certain information about Turkish military operations from Rome to Spain. Nothing is known of his career except the data contained in the trial records of the Inquisition, but there is no reason to believe that he was guilty of overstatement. His function at Rome was to protect the rights of the Order of Santiago; in doing so, he had aroused the hostility of rival interests. He was charged with having associated mainly with *conversos* while in Rome, but no details are available on this point. Like most defendants at the trials of the

Inquisition, Don Juan claimed that the witnesses for the prosecution were personally hostile to him; but he was in no position to deny that he had been devoted to Judaism in his youth. He tried to establish by formal argument that he could not very well be suspected of regarding the Turk as the Jewish redeemer and savior inasmuch as the Moslems of Granada were hostile to the Jews.

It is not possible, from the available records, to discern the personal character of the accused. Perhaps the worldly experiences and life at court had superseded the memories of his youth and his Jewish sentiments. In this respect he was probably like some other courtiers whom the monarchs rescued from the claws of the Inquisition, but his fate differed from theirs because his political star was already on the wane. Even his enemies could charge him only with having offended with words but not with deeds. On August 16, 1486, he was sentenced to die at the stake. Perhaps his judges knew more about him than is recorded in the court proceedings; or perhaps they could penetrate into the inner recesses of his being.²¹ Two years later, a born Christian who had testified in Juan's defense and who had shared with him in the gaities of life in Rome, was also condemned to death. This man's crime consisted in having manifested some sympathy for the doomed *conversos* and in having displayed a certain curiosity about the Jewish religion.²²

In August 1487, Pedro Serrano of Montalvan was indicted by the Inquisition in Toledo. Pedro was charged by the prosecutor-general with having practiced the Jewish religion and having read the Bible in Jewish homes in a Spanish translation in the customary Jewish fashion. Witnesses testified that he had once said, in discussing the Inquisition, that

it is not strange that God has said—and He did not lie—that those who now suffered [meaning the *converso* heretics] will be happy in the future, and that those who

rejoiced in their sufferings [meaning the good Catholics] are like serpents who licked their chops when speaking of the plight of the afflicted ones. But in the end all who suffered thus [the heretics] and lived in conformity with the Law of Moses will rise above those who rejoiced in their misfortune [the good Christians].

This man probably believed in the messianic prophecies then current among the Jews, who often applied the sayings of the prophets to the *conversos* and the heresy trials. The accused cleverly argued in his own defense that he had meant not the sinful *conversos*, but those who had rejoined the Church, and that he was attempting to vindicate them against their detractors. He had read the Spanish Bible only so that he might be able to argue with the Jews and the heretics. The Inquisition had him tortured twice; but when he persisted in his denials, he was released for lack of evidence after receiving one hundred strokes of the lash.²³

When a deceased *converso* by the name of Fernando González Husillo was tried in 1489 and 1490, the prosecution put in as evidence receipts signed by him in Hebrew as “Ferand David aben Gon Zalez.” This man had been baptized at the age of six or seven during the period of apostasy (1391–1415), and had always signed his name awkwardly in Hebrew. He did indeed live as a devout Jew throughout his long life. Testifying in his defense, the grandsons of the deceased stated that, at the time of the anti-*converso* riots in Toledo (in 1449 and 1467), Husillo had lived in a very dangerous area, but that the old Christians had not molested him or laid hands upon his property because they regarded him as a good Christian. The accused was acquitted, perhaps for lack of evidence or perhaps thanks to the high social standing of his heirs.²⁴

Another *converso*, a municipal councillor (*regidor*) of Toledo by the name of Fernando Alfonso, was charged with having taken refuge in a Jewish home during the disorders of 1467. Jewish artisans testified that they had heard him

reciting the *Shema* in his own room. His sentence was suspended.²⁵

On June 23, 1485, during the “period of grace,” a *converso* named Fernando Husillo, who was the treasurer of the church of San Vicente in Toledo, confessed that when occasion offered (for example, in the course of a journey), he had visited Jewish homes and partaken of Jewish food. He had also observed the Jewish mourning customs by sitting on the floor and eating eggs and fish. Husillo asserted that he did not regard this as a specifically Jewish rite: “It was the general custom in the city to do so without concealment, and no one objected.” The inquisitors were not satisfied with this interesting confession. A witness for the prosecution testified that ten years previously, while the accused held the office of municipal councillor, he had seen him and another councillor standing barefoot, among a group of worshipers who concealed them, in the synagogue on Yom Kippur eve. After a trial which lasted six months the accused was burned at the stake in August 1486.²⁶

A *converso* named Fernando de Madrid, of Torrelaguna in the archdiocese of Madrid, was tried by the Inquisition in 1491, a few years after his death. Most of the witnesses for the prosecution were Jews, who testified that Fernando had been in the habit of swearing by Jewish oaths. On one occasion he was alleged to have said: “May it be the will of the God who created the heavens and the earth to take us out from the midst of this people [the Christians] who watch our every movement and among whom we live cheated of what is ours!” In the year 1481 or thereabouts, when the Inquisition was being established and the Jews were segregated in separate quarters, the accused had occasionally visited a certain Jew in his home. Once he had asked his host to read the messianic prophecies to him, saying:

Have no fear! Until the appearance of the Messiah, whom all of us wait for, you must disperse in the moun-

tains. And I—I swear it by my life—when I hear that you are banished to separate quarters or endure some other hardship, I rejoice; for as soon as the measure of your torments and oppression is full, the Messiah, whom we all await, will speedily appear. Happy the man who will see him!

The accused often talked of the Redemption with Jews and had shown them scraps of paper, received by him from Jewish scholars in Toledo and Portugal, on which were inscribed the Ineffable Name of God and other combinations of Hebrew characters from which he had computed the date of the world's end. He had been in the habit of saying that the Messiah could not come until the *conversos* had atoned for their apostasy, and the Messiah would reveal himself “in the city of the logs” (referring perhaps to the faggots used in burning the victims of the Inquisition), that is, Seville. The accused had also said that when the Messiah came he would sell all he had and follow him. In the year 1487 he remarked that “in the year 1487 there will be no justice in the world; in 1488 the world will be a cowshed; and in 1489 there will be only one religion.” In approximately 1476, he had predicted that “the Messiah will come to the city of the logs, bringing with him the philosopher's stone which will transform into silver whatever piece of iron it touches and into gold if he touches with it a scrap of steel; and the treasures of the sea will be revealed unto him.” When the Messiah came, the accused had said, he would at once divide his fortune of 100,000 *maravedis* into two equal parts, giving half to his wife and children and taking the other half with him to the abode of the Messiah. He had also said that “those who deny this Messiah will have a member of their bodies amputated each day until they accept him; and then they will no longer believe in Jesus of Nazareth.” This eschatologist was posthumously tried and condemned as an apostate.²⁷

Most of the wealthy and educated *conversos* of Castile

conformed to this pattern. Generally speaking, no essential distinction can be drawn between those who were condemned to death and those who confessed and were forgiven as “penitents.” The prosecutor-general obviously could not have determined the truth or falsity of most of the confessions made to him during the “period of grace.” Many *conversos* whose confessions were acceptable at this time were tried again after the Expulsion and condemned to death.

As in Guadalupe, so in the monastery of St. Jerome in Toledo, some monks were discovered to be practicing Judaism. A certain monk in the monastery of La Sisla, who had been born a Jew and circumcised, was charged with having entered the monastery so that he might live as a Jew without interference by his relatives. When the Inquisition began to function in Toledo in 1485, he had looked troubled and comported himself “like a dead man,” owing to this “devilishness (*diablura*).” He had lauded the martyrs for dying heroically, like the Maccabees, for the Law of Moses. When Jewish artisans came to work at the monastery, he confided to them that he was a Jew and their kinsman. He also told them that he intended to go overseas; he had already made two attempts to escape, but had been brought back by force. The monk was released after he had been tortured three times without confessing, and after six other monks had offered to testify to his innocence, an offer most likely prompted by a desire to do what they could to protect the reputation of their monastery.

A different fate awaited another monk from the same monastery who was also caught at Jewish practices. In handing down their verdict (the text of which is all that has been preserved), his judges accused him of observing the Jewish laws; of refraining from food on the Jewish fasts and celebrating the Jewish festivals; and saying that faith in the images of Jesus and the saints was “a jest and a derision,” and that he apprehended God only by way of the intellect and not by

faith. He reproved the persecutors of the *conversos* to their faces and advised *conversos* who came to confess to him as Christians to bless their children in the Jewish manner. He also asked them to explain the Jewish commandments to him, not by way of reproving them for keeping those commandments, but as a means of obtaining information for himself. When *conversos* came to him for confession, he asked whether they approved of the deeds of the Inquisition. If they replied in the affirmative, he explained to them that they were guilty of a mortal sin and imposed penances upon them. Moreover, he had told them in so many words that he had entered the monastery so as to be able to observe Jewish practices the better, and that he would long since have gone overseas to live as a pious Jew had an opportunity presented itself. Since this man could not produce a sufficient number of witnesses to testify under oath in his favor, he was sentenced to death.²⁸

The artisans had always been the most faithful element in Spanish Jewry. During the mass conversions of 1391–1415, many devout artisans remained steadfast while educated Jews betrayed their religion and their people. Even among the *converso* workingmen there were some who were most zealously devoted to the Jewish religion. No wonder, then, that the Inquisition found most of its victims in their ranks. Furthermore, the judges saw no reason to accord them the same tolerance that they extended to wealthy and cultured individuals. Their attitude towards artisans was typified in the trial of a certain silk weaver, Juan de Sevilla, who pleaded guilty in Toledo in 1485. Juan testified that in his youth (about 1460) he was apprenticed to a Jewish silversmith (*platero*) in Seville and that this man had taught him to observe some of the Jewish laws. Later, he lived with his parents and other *conversos*, all artisans, in Seville and Cordova, all of whom kept “some” of the Mosaic commandments. Soon after the disorders of 1467, he went to Toledo. In the homes of the artisans who employed him it was customary to pray

from a Jewish prayer book in the Spanish language (*en romance*). His masters read the prayers aloud to him, and he repeated after them, as he did not know how to read. He lived with a woman who had been baptized only late in life, but conducted herself as a Jewess and had a daughter and a son by a Jewish father who lived in Guadalajara. Juan de Sevilla remained true to his Jewish faith and made plans to leave the country, in the company of another Jew, so as to be able to adopt the Jewish way of life completely. He gave up this plan only when he had reason to suspect his prospective travelling companion. He promised his wife to betroth her with a ring in accordance with the Jewish custom. He concealed Jews fleeing from the country in his home. Two *converso* silk weavers had lived in his home for the whole week of Passover and eaten *matzoth*, and he had joined them in their prayers, etc. Such was the gist of his confession. In the formal indictment of March 1486 the prosecutor asked the accused whether he expected to be pardoned after such a confession. Even at that, the confession was still regarded as incomplete. The prosecutor charged that Juan de Sevilla had returned to Judaism and taken a Jewish name. He produced trustworthy Jewish witnesses, artisans themselves, who testified, on pain of excommunication, that the accused had associated with them in the course of his work and in daily life. These witnesses stated that Juan de Sevilla had gone to celebrate the eight days of Passover with Jews at Montalvan, where he ate with them and prayed in their synagogue. He had obtained some *matzoth* from a Jewish barber who baked them. One of the witnesses alleged that while travelling with de Sevilla to the fair at Medina del Campo, he had seen him eating Jewish food on the journey.

Juan de Sevilla defended himself in the usual fashion. He claimed that he had not been circumcised (the judges did not find it necessary to have him examined), and that he had become a Jew only under the influence of his wife. The evidence

against him, so he claimed, was based on statements made by his wife and some Toledan Jews who charged him with responsibility for the death of her brother, a professing Jew who hanged himself in the prison of the Inquisition. The causes of that tragedy are not known. Weaklings like Juan de Sevilla were impelled by psychological factors to save themselves by sending others to their deaths, and to testify against other *conversos*, just as they testified against him. Brethren in affliction became enemies. The trial of this wretched silk weaver created panic and confusion among many Jews and *conversos*. Such cases were numerous. Despite Juan's attempts to have his life by denials and denunciations, his Jewish heart betrayed him. When he was brought, in the company of other prisoners, to the altar of the church, he turned away his head. In the prison he said to some of his fellow-prisoners: "The Lord who made me will be my defense. If I must die, it will be for that which He hath made." From this it was inferred that he intended to die as a Jew. And so he was burned as a martyr at the stake. His fate was shared by a number of *converso* tailors who lived in Toledo with their Jewish fellow-craftsmen and embraced Judaism.²⁹

In the year 1500, messianic rumors were again current in Castile. All these rumors were believed by *converso* artisans—shoemakers, blacksmiths, dyers, potters and the like. Though this occurred eight years after the Expulsion, mention of it is in place here because the leaders of this movement came from the very circles which had given the inquisitors much cause for concern and inquiry before the Expulsion.

The records of the Inquisition contain file upon file of material on the messianic movement, which attracted all the *conversos* in Spain. These files reveal the personalities of the prophets and prophetesses—men and girls from the poorest classes—who were followed by multitudes of adherents. The first of these visionaries was the "maiden of Herrera," a small town in the province of Palencia. Most of the members of the

converso community in Herrera believed in the prophetess who had arisen in their midst. One of the accused, a shoemaker from Toledo, told the inquisitors, with the simplicity and exactness customary at such trials, how he had first learned about the miracles performed by the young prophetess. One day, when he came to Herrera to buy leather for his work, a local *converso* told him of a miracle that occurred there the night before: Inés, the daughter of a shoemaker by the name of Estéban, had visited Heaven. The accused thereupon went to the home of the girl, where her father told her not to be shy and to tell how she had ascended. According to the girl's story, her deceased mother had come to her in the night and, taking her by the hand, had told her not to be afraid, for it was God's will that she go up to Heaven and see its mysteries and marvels. A boy who had died a few days earlier took her other hand, and an angel of God went before them. And so she was taken up to Heaven. In one sphere she saw Purgatory and the souls of the dead doing penance, while in another souls sat on golden chairs in glory. From overhead—from a higher sphere—came the sound of a great voice. When the girl inquired about the sound, the angel replied: "Beloved of God, those chanting up above are the very same as were burned here on earth, and they are above in glory." The girl then asked the angel for a sign so that she might be believed, and he promised to bring her a letter from God. The accused shoemaker then returned to his home in Toledo in great confusion of mind and waited for further reports. Later he learned that the miracle was waxing even greater. Once a week the girl was taken up to Heaven and given a token—a letter and products from the Holy Land, such as a large sheaf of wheat, an olive, and, some said, carnations and green sheaves of barley.

A girl from Chillon, in the vicinity of Ciudad Real, enjoyed similar visions. So did a wool-washer of Almodovar del Campo in the same province. This wool-washer, who fasted on certain days of the week, said that angels lifted him to Paradise, where he saw God and Elijah and the Messiah. He believed

that he would be the “*apostador con vara de oro*” (the “quartermaster with the golden rod”) for all who came to the Holy Land. The archives make no mention of the other prophetesses who appeared at this time in various places. All of them predicted that Elijah and the Messiah would soon appear, and that they would bear all *conversos* who believed in Redemption to the Land of Israel on the backs of clouds and on angels’ wings. God would lower a splendid city from the heavens to the earth for them, and there they would dwell in luxury, lacking nothing and eating off golden plates. In that city the youths and the maidens would find their destined mates. The believers would be resurrected from the dead, but the infidels would suffer torment. Various *converso* communities in Castile lived for some weeks in a state of exaltation and excitement. The believers led intensely ascetic lives, fasted on Mondays and Thursdays, and even small children fasted along with them and distributed alms. They adhered rigidly to all the Jewish observances, believing that the souls of the dead had revealed to them that only the pious would be redeemed. Some of the *conversos* gave parties and dances, hastily married off their sons and daughters, and brought gifts to the prophetess. The Leviathan was rumored dead, and signs of the Redemption were sought in the skies and the stars. Some *conversos* thought they had seen Abraham and Moses in their homes shedding radiance and a great light. Festive new garments were prepared and worn in readiness for the journey, until the inquisitors discovered what had been going on and burned the *conversos* at the stake one by one.³⁰ So did the *conversos* of central Castile, who had been oppressed by the Inquisition since 1485, muse and see visions.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INQUISITION IN ARAGON: THE PROVINCE OF VALENCIA

Simultaneously with the transfer of the Castilian Inquisition from Andalusia to the central part of the country, reli-

gious trials were instituted in Aragon under laws already in force in Castile. On May 7, 1484, Ferdinand announced to his officials at a session of the Cortes in Tarazona that he had concurred with the pope's decision to bring Jewish and Moslem heretics to trial in Aragon as well as in Castile.³¹ The new system was inaugurated in Valencia without much difficulty. The inquisitors who had previously functioned there were superseded by others appointed by the inquisitor general, Thomas de Torquemada. Taking over an established institution, the new inquisitors had only to impose more drastic penalties, as had been the case in Castile. In Valencia, as in Andalusia, the populace was keenly aware of the Jewish problem. In that large province, where cities were few and Moslem villages numerous, the judaizing *conversos* could propagate their faith with greater secrecy and ease. As late as 1486, *conversos* of Valencia, like their brethren in Andalusia, were able to find refuge on the estates of the nobility. *Conversos* gathered in groups at the port of Valencia, sailing from there to the countries of the Orient, where they could live freely and openly as Jews. Like their predecessors, the new inquisitors appointed by Torquemada at first adopted a moderate policy in Valencia. In the years between 1484 and 1492 they thrice re-enacted the "Edict of Grace" of 1482, something unprecedented at the time.

In response to that edict, Juana Desfar came four times, ostensibly of her own free will, to confess to her judges. Nevertheless, in June 1492, the prosecutor-general demanded her arrest on the ground that her confessions were inadequate and deficient, and that, despite her oath, she had continued to practice the Jewish religion. While her first husband, a merchant from Barcelona, and her second husband, a notary from Valencia, were alive, she had conducted herself as a Jewess. She had fasted on Yom Kippur and induced others to do so, read to other *conversos* from her prayer book in the Valencian dialect and in the Hebrew language, and so forth.

The accused denied all the charges until the very end of her trial, when she was sentenced as a refractory heretic. At the last she confessed all her sins and died a Christian.³²

In a similar case, in 1482, the inquisitors accepted the “repentance” of a *converso* by the name of G. R. Esplugues, but tried him again in January 1491, and fourteen months later, in March 1492, sentenced him to death. Esplugues was born a Jew in a small place in the province of Valencia, and was brought up in the Jewish faith in Algiers. Later he returned to Valencia, embraced Christianity at the age of thirty-five, and married a Christian woman. His apostasy seems to have been due to family quarrels and a love affair. Yet his yearnings for his ancestral faith gave him no peace. He thought and argued much about the messianic prophecies, and came to the conclusion that they had not yet been fulfilled; the Christian interpretations could not, therefore, be true. In telling Bible stories to his beloved, he was moved to tears. When his wife stopped giving birth, he asked a Jewish physician for a Hebrew amulet, which is preserved to this day with the records of his trial. Esplugues also had some Hebrew books on alchemy in his possession. He made plans to leave Spain and live as a Jew abroad; he even boasted that he had converted a Franciscan friar to Judaism. In 1482 he joined other *conversos* in a plot to kill the inquisitor. He cherished the wish to die a martyr’s death and to proclaim with his dying breath that he was giving his life for his people. And, indeed, he was sentenced to death and executed.³³

These constitute but a few examples of the “tolerance” shown by the inquisitors. After three times absolving the accused from their sins, the judges found at last that they had been deceived. In most instances, there was no occasion for the inquisitors to delude themselves. Most of the *conversos* were descended from converts who had been baptized under stress during the period of persecution and apostasy, and were to all intents still Jews. Searches in their homes revealed

parts of the Book of Psalms, and also whole prayer books in the Valencian dialect. They were familiar with the *Shirath ha-Yam*, the hymn *Yoshev beseter elyon*, the *Ehad mi yode'a*, which contain the Jewish credos, expressions of personal and national trust in God, and references to the miracle of the Red Sea and to national redemption. A certain *converso* woman always made a certain sign when she saw “born” Christians, and expressed the wish that all *goyim* who looked at her might go blind. When she was sent to the prison of the Inquisition, she took her own cooking utensils with her so as to be able to prepare her food in the Jewish manner.³⁴

In 1485, a *converso* by the name of Jaime Ferrer, a cloth merchant, was executed by the Inquisition. After being reconciled with the Church during the “period of grace,” he had continued to practice the Jewish religion. For example, he wore the ritual fringes under his cloak. He was reported often to have remarked that the *conversos* were enslaved for their own sins, but that God would nevertheless remember them. Moreover, it was nowhere written that Jerusalem had been destroyed for the death of Jesus. The accused attended *converso* gatherings where the Bible was read and interpreted by a Jew in the traditional Jewish fashion. Two months prior to his arrest, Ferrer had circumcised his son “after the manner of the Jews in circumcising Christian children.” This fact was verified by fourteen physicians and surgeons appointed by the inquisitors. Ferrer had often read a book in which Jesus was blasphemed. After his “repentance” was accepted, he told various persons that the inquisitors had imposed unlawful penalties and penances upon him, and that he had confessed sins which he never committed, as *conversos* often did in order to be left in peace. Inquisitors, he had added, had only one object: to extort money from the *conversos*. But this would prove a costly affair for the king; for every *converso* burned he would pay by stirring up the Jewishness of two hundred others. Before his arrest the accused had made

plans to go to Constantinople and live there as a Jew. He had been invited to come to that city by a rich Jewish kinsman who promised to help him.³⁵

Many Jewish teachers instructed the *conversos* in Jewish doctrine. In 1488, a Jew from Murviedro who had taught Judaism to *conversos* was sentenced by the inquisitors to banishment from the province of Valencia for two years, payment of a fine, and a promise under oath not to repeat the offense. In view of all that this man had done—providing *conversos* with *matzoth* and *kasher* meat, and the like, inviting them to his home on the Jewish festivals, and reading to them from the Bible and other Hebrew works on the Sabbath—the inquisitors certainly dealt leniently with him. He had even placed a Scroll of the Law in the home of a *converso*.³⁶

Most of the *conversos* in Valencia belonged to the wealthy and cultured classes. In Valencia, as elsewhere in Spain, the women in particular were ready to die for the Jewish faith. Up to June 1488, Torquemada's deputies in Valencia approved the "repentance" of 983 men and women, including about a hundred wives and daughters of martyred *conversos*.³⁷ The latter figure shows that at least one hundred persons were executed in the short space of four years; the actual number was probably larger. The inquisitors of Valencia were thus not much more "tolerant" than their Andalusian associates. There are indications of bigoted hatred on their part which are not to be found in the records of earlier trials.

In 1487, witnesses came to testify that certain *conversos* had scourged a crucifix. In 1489, the inquisitors asked a woman defendant if she had ever scourged a crucifix or knew of anyone else who had done so.³⁸ This is an amazing question. True, Jews and *conversos* were capable of at times breaking crucifixes or trampling them underfoot, but scourging is unthinkable. This slander may have originated at the

Saragossa trials, which will be discussed presently. Other peculiar questions of the same sort were put by the inquisitors. In April 1485 the *conversa* Juana Desfar was asked “Whether, in order to travesty the sufferings of our Savior, she had ever beaten or crucified a hen, a man, a cow or a sheep, or whether she knew of any other person who had done such a thing?”³⁹ The confused formulation of such queries indicates their source. By such diabolical questionings it was hoped to evoke confessions of ritual murders and the like. Thus, the first steps had been taken along a road that the Inquisition fully intended to follow as soon as it saw fit.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE INQUISITION IN SARAGOSSA AND TERTUEL

On the strength of the Tarazona resolutions, Torquemada appointed two inquisitors for Saragossa early in May 1484. These appointments were intended as a declaration of war not only on the *conversos*, who were very influential in the Kingdom of Aragon, but also on the freedom of the country and its laws, under which foreigners were not eligible for appointment to public office. Torquemada’s deputies violated the underlying spirit of the inquisitor general’s instructions, and started their trials immediately, without first issuing the “Edict of Grace.” On May 10, 1484, the first official “Act of Faith” took place in Saragossa. One man and three women were compelled to do penance for having practiced Jewish rites and blasphemed the name of Jesus. On June 3, two *conversos* were executed and a dead woman’s remains were exhumed and burned. In view of the strong public opposition that developed after these initial measures, the inquisitors were obliged to remain quiescent for a time. Only a year and a half later did they venture to make a fresh start.

On November 29, 1484, at the urging of *conversos* who were connected with the local and provincial administration, the Diputación (the Council of the Estates) of Aragon sent a

delegation to the king with a request that the new Inquisition should be stopped. The grounds given for this request were: that the Inquisition violated the laws of the country and that, in consequence of its activities, the whole Kingdom of Aragon would probably be ruined and depopulated. The delegation argued that the appointment of officials by a foreigner like Torquemada was illegal, and that his confiscations were incompatible with the *fueros* of the kingdom. The delegates assured the king that they were far from objecting to heresy trials as such, but felt that the Inquisition ought to function in accordance with divine and human law so as to bring sinners back to the bosom of the Holy Mother Church by means of instruction and admonition. Only mild penances ought to be imposed by the Church, and good and pious men should not be subject to aspersions. For such purposes the existing ecclesiastical institutions were sufficient, especially since there were no notorious heretics in Aragon. (Letters to this effect were sent to high court officials of Aragon, including such irreproachable *conversos* as Alfonso de la Cavalleria and Gabriel Sánchez, who were then sojourning with the king in Andalusia.) The king gave the delegates from Aragon a very abrupt answer, saying that in his opinion the old inquisitors had been remiss in their duty and had accepted bribes. Furthermore, if there were really only a few heretics in Aragon, wherefore this fear of the Inquisition? ⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Torquemada seems to have realized that the capital of Aragon could not be taken by direct assault, and he accordingly set up a central tribunal for the whole kingdom without at first indicating where it would function. As head of the new court, Torquemada appointed a Dominican friar, Juan de Solivera, or Çolivera, a relatively young man possessing neither scruples nor mercy.⁴¹ Solivera decided to begin by establishing his authority in Teruel, either because that city was close to the Castilian border or because it had a notorious reputation for “heresy.” On May 23, 1484, Solivera

and his associates, who were then on their way to Teruel, stopped at a monastery near the walls of the city. The city fathers opposed the entry of the inquisitors into Teruel for fear that the persecution of *conversos* and Jews would prove harmful to the public interest. They objected to the foreign zealots who had come to “hold a trial in the same disorganized manner as in Castile and in accordance with the same unfair rules, which are contrary to all law and justice.” Long-drawn-out negotiations followed. The inquisitors insisted that they had the support of the local peasants, who suffered from hail and famine and disease and lost their children owing to the wickedness of the people of Teruel. Thereupon the municipality sent emissaries to all the other cities of Aragon in hope of enlisting their advice and cooperation.

When Teruel persisted in its opposition, Solivera left the monastery in the middle of August and established himself in the neighboring village of Cella, from which he banished the few Jewish residents within eight days. From Cella, Solivera sent reports to the authorities in Saragossa and to the king, who was then in Cordova. The municipality of Teruel sent a delegation to the royal court, but Ferdinand dismissed them with a rebuke. In January, 1485, the king appointed Juan Garcez de Marcilla, a noble resident in Teruel and very devoted to the cause of the Inquisition, as officer in charge of the town, and ordered him to take the town by storm. The citizenry began preparations for the assault but finally gave up, considering the dangers of a military conquest. On March 25, 1485, the Inquisition made its entry into Teruel. Later the inquisitors boasted that they had actually destroyed that rebellious city.⁴²

Among the local opponents of the foreign Inquisition there were of course not a few *conversos*—merchants, jurists and municipal councillors—who made no secret of their Jewish affiliations. While the municipality and the inquisitors were carrying on their quarrel, a rumor was spread that a woman

of the Besant family had been buried fifteen years previously in the Jewish cemetery, while a wooden dummy had been interred in her stead in the Christian graveyard. Solivera launched his investigations while still in the village of Cella, and ended then with an outburst of ferocity beyond anything his most fanatical associates and teachers had been guilty of. While in Teruel and the vicinity—from late 1484 to 1486—he sentenced over thirty persons to the stake, and approved the penitential confessions of only seven.⁴³ The “Edict of Grace” was never promulgated at all. So low a ratio of acquitted to condemned persons had no precedent. That the number of persons condemned was no larger may be attributed to the fact that many persons had fled the city during the negotiations. It is noteworthy that the knight who was instructed to seize the city by military force was the chief witness for the prosecution, and that among those condemned to death were this man’s own wife, her sister and her brother.⁴⁴

The *conversos* of Teruel doubtless deserved their “ill repute” as Jews-in-fact, if it is assumed—and there is no reason for not doing so—that the records of the trial of one of them, a certain Juan Sánchez Exarch, are accurate. This man was charged with daily practice of almost all the Jewish rites and with strict Sabbath observance. His tables were alleged always to have been covered with white cloths on the Sabbath (except when precautions had to be taken). He always sought the society of Jews on the Sabbath and on Jewish festivals. On the Passover he ate from new utensils; on Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, he either built a booth of his own or visited the booths of Jewish relatives and friends, who were “bad Christians,” that is, good Jews. When he prayed, he turned his face to the east and set his feet close together. As such times he allowed no interruptions except by signs. On the other hand, he was ignorant of the Christian prayers and credo. His meat was bought

from a Jewish butcher, and in an emergency he would slaughter his own meat according to the Jewish ritual. When he was anxious and troubled in his mind, he went to the Jews for comfort.⁴⁵

It is obvious that, alongside the Jewish community of Teruel, there was a community of *conversos* who assembled for public worship, Bible readings, and the like. Most of them were descendants of Jews converted during the years 1391–1415. There was a *converso* merchant in Teruel who had been beguiled into baptism when he was only about fourteen years of age. This man always prepared *kasher* food for his mother when she visited him, and on Jewish festival days he would visit her in the Jewish quarter. His brother, who later went to the Holy Land, would come to his house, and there they discussed points of Jewish doctrine. “Rabbi Samuel”—probably the rabbi of the Jewish community—kept in close touch with these *conversos*, and was therefore compelled by the inquisitors to give testimony. His statements are remarkable for their good sense, accuracy, and avoidance of slander.⁴⁶

MURDER OF THE INQUISITOR PEDRO DE ARBUES AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

In the meantime, the Saragossa municipality was proceeding with its diplomatic efforts to avoid the horrors of the Castilian Inquisition. No *conversos* took part officially in these transactions. In January 1485, it was rumored, however, that the converts were collecting funds for a concerted effort to release one of their people from prison by force.⁴⁷ The *conversos* hired mercenaries for armed resistance, and finally decided to assassinate one or two of the inquisitors so as to put a stop to their activities. On the night of September 16, the inquisitor Pedro de Arbues, Maestre de Epila, was murdered in the cathedral while at his prayers. The church bells were rung, and the “good” Christians seized their weapons with intent to kill the *conversos*, and,

as far as possible, to vent their fury upon the Jewish and Moslem quarters. The municipal and royal authorities quickly quelled the disorders at the outset, and ordered a search made for the murderers. Thus the last and most daring attempt by the *conversos* to resist the Inquisition by force ended in failure.

In December 1485, the Inquisition again sent two *conversos* to the stake. Beginning with February 1486, it arranged monthly "Acts of Faith" in public. The murdered inquisitor was replaced by another fanatic (for a time the post was filled by Solivera, who was notorious for his brutality at Teruel), and the suspects of the murder were placed on trial. In this as in other scandalous trials held in those days, the indictment was based on confessions extracted under torture and on mutual slanders which were often contradictory on points of detail. In this case, however, the prosecution did not base its charges on such evidence alone; the murder and the body of the murdered man were matters of public knowledge! All other matters taken for granted by the inquisitors must be regarded by the modern historian as unproven, especially since few of the original documents have been found and only extracts from those documents have seen the light of print. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that this material would mislead a historian regarding the Jewish background.

The *conversos* were not alone in their opposition to the Inquisition at Saragossa; they enjoyed the backing of the champions of political liberty. The representatives of the political parties in Saragossa, more than those in any other city, worked in close association with men of Jewish origin—a fact of which the public was well aware. Most of the murder suspects were *conversos* and others whose Jewish leanings were a matter of public knowledge. The arch-conspirator, Jaime de Montesa, who was condemned and executed in August 1487, was an aged and distinguished jurist and deputy of the chief

justice of the municipality (*Justicia mayor*). Speaking by and large, the allegations of the witnesses for the prosecution were definitely not unfounded in Montesa's case. They said that on his visits to his mother in Calatayud *kasher* meat was served, and that no one but a judaizing *converso* was permitted to wait on the table; at other times food was brought from the home of Jewish relatives living in the Jewish quarter, and no Christian was permitted to touch it. On a certain Friday, while the Christians were at church, the Montesa family celebrated a wedding according to the Jewish rites. When Montesa was reminded that it was unseemly to dance while Christians were weeping in church, he retorted flippantly: "Next time they'll laugh and we'll cry!" Montesa was also alleged to have repeatedly quoted the skeptical saying: "In this world you will not see me in trouble, and in another world you will not see me in torment!" He had allowed his daughter to dance at Jewish weddings. On two occasions he attended the synagogue on Jewish festivals and praised the Jewish sermons. It was the custom in his home to lay the table on the Sabbath with a white cloth and lighted candles and to serve *hamin* (the Jewish Sabbath dish).^{*} He was suspected of keeping to his room on Saturdays so as to be able to recite the Jewish prayers in private, and he was said to have consorted intimately with Jews in his home. Montesa's brother, who was a monk, had reproved him for behaving like a Jew, and had refused to eat in his or his mother's home in the company of Jews. The physicians who examined Montesa were unable to determine whether or not he had been circumcised.

Shortly before the end of this trial, Montesa, realizing that his end was near, confessed some of his sins. Admitting that the table had been laid for the Sabbath and that the Sabbath dish had been served in his home, he said that his household

^{*} A Jewish dish kept warm since Friday afternoon. Cf. Mishnah Shabbat, chs. 3-4.

had followed the practice for about twelve years, but had abandoned it three years previously (probably because the Church began to exercise stricter supervision at the time). He had once thought it possible to reconcile the New Testament with Sabbath observance, but now that he was about to die, he wished to believe only what was commanded by the Holy Mother Church, and he rendered praise and thanks to God that it was so. Such were the last words of an inconstant apostate. Montesa was a skeptic in some minor respects, but on the whole was deeply attached to Judaism. His daughter was said to have fasted on the Day of Atonement for fifty years.⁴⁸

The other men accused of complicity in the murder of the inquisitor belonged to the same social and religious circles as Montesa. Juan de Pero Sánchez, a brother of the treasurer Gabriel Sánchez, succeeded in escaping. He was condemned to death for complicity in the murder of the inquisitor and for practicing the Jewish religion, and in his absence, was burned in effigy. Alfonso Sánchez, another brother of Gabriel, was also tried. He was reported to have read the Bible to Christians clothed in the garb of a rabbi. A third brother, Guillen Sánchez, was allowed to repent. Luis de Santangel, a kinsman of the *Escribano de Ración* (comptroller-general), was accused of complicity in the murder and of adherence to Judaism. He was condemned to death. (This Luis de Santangel was the father-in-law of the Gabriel Sánchez; he was knighted in 1462 by John II for his services in the war with the Catalanian rebels.) Santangel was reported to have kept a Scroll of the Law in his home and to have recited prayers in Hebrew. His brother, the prior of a monastery in Daroca, had to do penance for having tried to persuade witnesses to testify in Luis' favor. Francisco de Sancta Fé, a grandson of Joshua Halorki and legal adviser of the commissioner for the Kingdom of Aragon, committed suicide in the prison of the Inquisition. His body was burned and the

ashes were thrown into the Ebro River. The court held that Sancta Fé was also implicated in the murder of the inquisitor Arbues. Sancta Fé was circumcised and did much to propagate the Jewish religion.⁴⁹

The suspicions which led to the deaths of these men spread further and further afield until they were attached to some of the most intimate political advisers of Ferdinand and Isabella. Witnesses testified that Gabriel Sánchez and Alfonso de la Cavalleria had sent letters in a secret code from the royal camp at Cordova to their brethren in Saragossa urging them to hasten to kill the inquisitor and assuring them that the king would be on their side; only the haughty queen and that son of Satan and disciple of the Antichrist, the prior of Santa Cruz, would be hostile. A letter to this effect is attached to the records of de la Cavalleria's trial, but it was probably considered a forgery.⁵⁰ A priest from the bishopric of Vich in Catalonia testified that, in July 1485, while he was on a mission for his bishop to the royal court at Cordova, he had seen Sánchez and de la Cavalleria, who were usually at daggers' points, engaged in earnest conversation and that they had seemed to be troubled. For some reason the witness was under the impression that they were talking about the Inquisition. Two months later the inquisitor was killed. Whether all these allegations were mere slander and rumor, or whether there was a grain of truth in them, it is impossible to determine. Witnesses also testified that the two *conversos* were attached to the Jewish religion. Gabriel Sánchez was reported to have dined at the home of a certain Jew in Madrid in the company of other aristocratic *conversos*. He held this Jew in high esteem and had joined him in the Sabbath prayers. Sánchez and his brothers were alleged to have asked a certain R. Manuel ben Aljoar of Magallon to cast their horoscopes and to write Hebrew amulets for them. The inquisitors do not seem to have regarded these as especially weighty transgressions.

THE TRIAL OF ALFONSO DE LA CAVALLERIA

Very strange and ominous allegations were made about the vice chancellor, Alfonso de la Cavalleria.⁵¹ Almost the whole Cavalleria family was suspected of heresy. Some members of the family had pews of their own in the synagogue. The women obtained *hamin* and other victuals from the Jews on the Sabbath, donated oil for illumination in the synagogue, and distributed alms to the Jewish poor on Rosh Hashanah, Succoth, Hanukkah, Purim, and other occasions. The personality of Pedro de la Cavalleria, who posed as a devout Christian while at heart he was a skeptic and sometimes reverted fondly in his thoughts to his ancestral traditions, has already been discussed above. His son, the vice chancellor, cherished a stronger attachment to Judaism. This difference between father and son reveals a change in the general attitude of the *conversos* towards their people when it was sore beset.

Some of the testimony concerning Alfonso merits citation: On April 30, 1492, one day after the Expulsion Edict was issued in Saragossa, R. Levi ben Shemtob, a local rabbi, made a statement to the inquisitors to the effect that two years previously (in 1490 or thereabouts), acting under orders from the Inquisition, he had urged his congregation on three Sabbaths to report everything they knew about Christians who still practiced Judaism, and warned them that anyone who failed to give such information would be excommunicated. R. Levi had stressed the strictness of the ban, pointing out that, if it were violated by one Jew, all the other Jews would be held guilty of his sin, and that the transgressor would have no merits whatsoever in the sight of God. Some days later, an *adelantado* of the Saragossa community, Don Jacob Hazan, since deceased, made a confession to him and swore him to secrecy. From Hazan's confession it appeared that Alfonso de la Cavalleria had "been like a father"

to the Jews. While ostensibly keeping them at arm's length in public, he had secretly been very helpful, and advised them to go to the king and to insist on their right to receive interest on loans.

On May 1, 1492, another Jewish witness testified that Don Alfonso had sworn to him by the Ten Commandments that he would protect the rights of the *aljama*. And, indeed, as appears from other records, the vice chancellor received a fee from the *aljama* of Saragossa for making representations on its behalf to the authorities. This seemingly odd behavior on the part of the highest official in the kingdom could easily have given rise to invidious criticism.

Don Jacob Hazan also told R. Levi ben Shemtob that in his opinion Don Alfonso "was really a Jew" (*judio mamas*). On one occasion, when Don Jacob came to him to complain that the municipal officials were treating the *aljama* unfairly, the vice chancellor criticized him for his political ineptness in administering the communal affairs, saying: "I am sorry for you Jews, but your folly makes it impossible for me to help you. But I have one consolation: that though your bodies suffer injury in this world, you have saved your souls for the world to come." Then Don Alfonso broke down, crying out that Don Jacob had made him say things he had kept to himself these thirty years. Don Jacob then asked the rabbi whether he would be excommunicated if he did not report this matter to the heresy inquisitors. He knew that the vice chancellor and Gabriel Sánchez, the treasurer, who "held the king in the palm of his hand," had tried to release themselves from the control of the Inquisition, but that some wicked Jews had denounced them to the inquisitors and tried to ruin them. Don Jacob did not wish to further their evil designs, and accordingly asked the rabbi to exempt him from the ban. Rabbi Levi replied that the Law of Moses required that oaths should be sworn to nothing but the truth and that the ban should be enforced, but that the Talmud permitted relaxation

of the ban when the security of the whole Jewish community was at stake. If, the rabbi then told Don Jacob, he was convinced that “our lives depend on Maestre Alfonso,” he would do well to keep silence; he himself would do likewise. But now, since the Expulsion Edict had been published and the community could no longer be saved, and he himself was on the point of leaving the country, R. Levi felt that the ban should no longer be violated. He had therefore come to report the whole conversation to the inquisitors, whom he assured that he did not know the vice chancellor personally and had never even see him. His testimony was offered only under the compulsion of his own conscience.

On May 7, 1492, a Jewish tailor testified that he had worked in the home of Don Alfonso some ten years previously (in 1482). At that time R. Isaac de Leon, the famous rabbi of Ocaña (Castile) and a friend of the vice chancellor, had been introduced to one another by a Saragossa Jew named Astruc Haninai. One day Don Alfonso asked the tailor to invite R. Isaac to visit him, and the two men were closeted together for two or three hours. When they came out of the room the tailor overheard R. Isaac de Leon say to Don Alfonso: “Well, my lord, you will soon see that what I have told you is the truth.” Don Alfonso replied: “Good! We shall see!” In continuing his testimony the tailor said that he had not understood these remarks, but that there had been a violent controversy at the time on some point of ritual law, concerning the use of the fat under an animal’s loins, between R. Isaac de Leon and R. Isaac Zayet, a scholar from Saragossa, who was R. Isaac’s leading rival.*

In this public controversy, over which feeling ran very high, R. Isaac was backed by Don Alfonso de la Cavalleria,

*This is the subject mentioned by the author of Beth Yosef, Yoreh Deah, ch. 64, in the following passage: “This fat was permitted the people of Aragon until the great rabbi—the late R. Isaac de Leon—took a contrary view and forbade them to use it.”

vice chancellor of the Kingdom of Aragon and the most distinguished statesman and jurist of his age, while R. Isaac Zayet was supported by Luis Sánchez, the royal bailiff of the Kingdom of Aragon and brother of Gabriel Sánchez, who died before these trials took place. The tailor several times saw the rabbi and the vice chancellor engaged in earnest talk and discussion in the latter's library. Once he asked R. Isaac de Leon what it all meant, but was rebuffed. The rabbi told him to hold his tongue, for he could understand nothing of the matter. This led the tailor to assume that religious topics had been discussed.

On May 18, 1492, a disciple of R. Isaac de Leon testified that in 1488 or 1489, Don Alfonso lived in a Jewish home while the royal court was at Ocaña. R. Isaac called on him the day of his arrival, and they talked together in his room. In November 1489, a Jewish merchant named Moses Haninai Adret testified that fourteen years previously, when he was a young man, Alfonso de la Cavalleria had dissuaded him from becoming a convert, and had strongly upheld the arguments of his father, Cresques Haninai, who was a friend of the vice chancellor. The same witness had testified in March 1488 that his father went with him one night to the vice chancellor's home to warn him of an impending assault and to rebuke him for his overweening pride. Don Alfonso thereupon produced an amulet prepared for him by an aged Sicilian scholar who was then the rabbi of Saragossa, saying that this afforded him ample protection against his enemies. Less explicit testimony was given by a Christian witness concerning a Jewish scholar of Syracuse (Sicily), who had lived in Saragossa for many years before going to the Holy Land. This scholar had often read the Hebrew Bible with the sons of Alfonso and with other *conversos*. The usual tales were told about Jaime de la Cavalleria, a brother of Alfonso who held an important post in the municipality, such as that he had attended the synagogue secretly on

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in order to pray with the Jews.

Immediately after the murder of Arbues, the inquisitors in Saragossa began to gather evidence to incriminate Gabriel Sánchez and Alfonso de la Cavalleria, as they had already done in connection with their kinsmen and all the other suspects. However, their trials dragged on and were postponed for many years. In 1488, the pope left Gabriel Sánchez's sentence to the discretion of the archbishop of Seville and nothing more was heard of the matter. In 1488, the case of de la Cavalleria was referred to the pope for his personal attention, and in 1501, de la Cavalleria was completely exonerated by the papal legate. As was customary in such cases, no reasons were forthcoming for the verdict. The records show that the vice chancellor's plea stated in 1500 that he had had various transactions with the Jews in the course of his official duties. Nor did he deny having talked with R. Isaac de Leon, but declared that all this was entirely within legal limits. After the lapse of so many years it was a simple matter for him to discredit the witnesses for the prosecution. The Jewish witnesses had left the country at the time of the Expulsion, or died before that. Those who remained in the country and had been baptized were flighty individuals who readily retracted their earlier testimony. It was also possible to brand them as informers, intent on ruining the vice chancellor and his family for the very reason that the latter were so hostile to the Jews. Numerous Christian notables came forward to testify that the noble accused had always enjoyed an excellent reputation. There seems to have been some connection between the acquittal of Sánchez and Cavalleria and the negotiations that were then in progress, to the dismay of the Christian extremists, between the Spanish government and the pope concerning private "penitence" for *converso* notables and aristocrats.⁵²

Alfonso de la Cavalleria's trial lasted for nearly twenty years. The records fill almost 500 folios. The prosecutor-general untiringly produced all sorts of curious witnesses, but the defense merely submitted formal denials of the charges. A modern historian is unable to determine the accuracy of the evidence for the prosecution, as it stands, but it is not self-contradictory. The arguments for the defense, however, must be rejected out of hand. The tactics employed by the defense were feeble and disingenuous. On the other hand, the stories about Cavalleria's affiliations with Judaism are vivid and factual. Hundreds and thousands of people were condemned to death by ecclesiastical judges on the strength of similar and less convincing testimony. As many of the witnesses for the prosecution were Jews, there is the possibility that some of them may have been informers who wished to revenge themselves upon de la Cavalleria. Yet such people would hardly have the imagination required to fabricate fanciful tales out of whole cloth. What a pity that we have no details of the conversations held between the great courtier and R. Isaac the cabalist! It is a pity, too, that we can never know whether these distinguished *conversos* were really interested in the rabbinical controversy over a problem of ritual law. The bare facts given in evidence seem to be true beyond all question, and were only later embroidered by the gossips of the Jewish quarter. Be that as it may, the evidence does contain a trace of historical truth.

When the personal traits, both manifest and inferred, of this famous statesman are pieced together, there emerges a remarkable portrait of an apostate Jew of that age, and it is unlikely that a modern poet could muster the talent required for creating its counterpart. Reference has already been made above to the historian Palencia's tribute to Cavalleria's brilliant legal attainments and keen mind, which served him well in solving very complicated political prob-

lems in the early years of Ferdinand's reign in Castile. From documents published in recent years it is obvious that de la Cavalleria served his king faithfully, especially in putting into effect the policies of absolutism and reform in the Kingdom of Aragon. In 1479, he initiated reforms in the municipality of Barcelona, and persisted in his efforts in spite of the opposition of the municipal authorities. As vice chancellor of the Kingdom of Aragon, he had a decisive say in most of the administrative affairs of the region. In 1484, the king wished to invest him with similar authority in the province of Catalonia, though the people of that province were entitled, under their laws and privileges, to refuse to accept a foreign official on their territory. Neither then nor in the following years were any attempts made to oust de la Cavalleria on account of his Jewish origin or his heretical leanings.

In July 1485, hostile testimony was taken for the first time by the inquisitors in Saragossa concerning de la Cavalleria. In June 1486, his brother was burned in effigy. Early in 1486, Don Alfonso was one of the first officials to take part in the inauguration of the Castilian Inquisition in Barcelona. A delegation from Barcelona to the royal court expressed its astonishment that, contrary to the laws of Catalonia, he had advised the king to authorize the inquisitors to appoint gendarmes and arrest heresy suspects. In 1489, de la Cavalleria was still making reforms in the municipal administration of Barcelona, and the city fathers addressed a most flattering letter to him expressing their pleasure that he should be administering their affairs, inasmuch as he was so wise, so well versed in the laws, and so devoted to the city.⁵³ Cavalleria, like other officials of Jewish extraction, seems to have regarded the Inquisition merely for a *raison d'état*. Christian witnesses described him to the inquisitors as a proud man and an Averroist—a typical Renaissance personality. A well-known saying—"In this world one has only to be born and to die;

there is no other Paradise”—was often attributed to him. Cavalleria was reported to have said on another occasion that Julius Caesar’s place was in Paradise.⁵⁴ This varied evidence, in spite of all the inconsistencies, combines to form a comprehensible spiritual portrait of de la Cavalleria. Though what the witnesses said about him may not have been accurate in every particular, similar characteristics appear in the personalities of other forced converts and apostates. The enlightened humanist and brilliant statesman, whom the city fathers of Barcelona flattered so subserviently, was attracted by the mysteries of the Jewish religion and in his inmost being was moved by the sufferings of his innocent people.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE INQUISITION IN SARAGOSSA

Such were the personalities of these *conversos* of high degree, and such was their fate. Most of the other *conversos* tried by the Inquisition at Saragossa were humble men—shopkeepers and artisans—who had no interest in assassinations or in high politics. Their one and only crime was their loyalty to the Jewish religion. Since most of the court records are either missing or still await study by modern scholars, our only information is derived from semi-official notes made at the time. The *conversos*—so it was said—were very skeptical about religion in general and hated and despised the “born Christians, the ill-fated Christians” (*cristianos de natura, cristianos de mala ventura*), whom it was no sin to deceive. Apart from such understandable charges, the witnesses attributed to the *conversos* actions of which they were probably not guilty. For example, the *conversos* in Saragossa were supposed to perform a certain ritual for a demon that they kept in their homes. It is odd that such strange goings-on should have been discovered by the inquisitors in Saragossa and nowhere else.⁵⁵ The men implicated in the murder of Arbues were said to have scourged a

crucifix, to the accompaniment of Hebrew prayers and sermons, in imitation of the torments of Jesus on the cross. The *conversos* in question were alleged to have played the roles of Pilate, the high priest Annas (Hanan), Judas, and Longinus, who pierced the side of Jesus with a spear. These tales were manifest tissues of lies invented by antisemites. Such actions are not mentioned anywhere in Hebrew literature, and appear only in the New Testament and in late Christian tradition.⁵⁶ Yet the inquisitors included this story in indictments on the strength of which a number of *conversos* were sentenced to die at the stake. Shortly thereafter similar libels appear in the records of the Inquisition in Valencia and at a somewhat later time in those of the scandalous La Guardia trial, which will be discussed presently. An antisemitic historian like Andres Bernáldez mentions no such tales in his enumeration of the sins of the *conversos* of Andalusia. Nor has the present writer found any parallel to them in the records of the Toledan tribunal. It may therefore be assumed that it was only after particular developments had taken place that the Inquisition began to make use of such libels under certain temporary and local conditions—after, that is, the ground had been prepared for fanciful tales woven and false allegations, and after such methods had been approved to hasten and to complete the work of destruction.

The Inquisition sacrificed most of the middle and lower-class *conversos* with little ado. In Saragossa, as in Teruel, a far larger number of *conversos* were condemned to death than were permitted to recant. Up to 1492, about 600 adult men and women were sentenced to mild and severe penalties in Saragossa.⁵⁷ These figures indicate that a fairly large community of *conversos* who retained their Jewish affiliations lived in the Jewish quarters of Saragossa, in the heart of the city. This physical proximity did not, of course, suit the fanatical Christians, who therefore plotted to expel the Jews from Saragossa and Teruel, just as they had expelled them

from the cities of Andalusia. In the year 1486, the authorities in Saragossa received orders from the king and from Torquemada to expel the Jews from the archbishopric of Saragossa and from the bishopric of Albarracin. The Jews were allowed by the inquisitors a period of three months in which to wind up their affairs. The king later wrote to the prior of the Santa Cruz monastery suggesting an extension of six months.⁵⁸ There is, however, no record that the expulsion ever took place at all. On the contrary, the Jews are known to have remained in all the areas in question until the very last day before the Expulsion Edict was implemented. Such partial Expulsion Edicts continued to be mere phases of the varied, and varying, plans for settling the Jewish question, until a complete solution was eventually found.

THE INQUISITION IN BARCELONA

Finally, the Inquisition approached the gates of Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia.⁵⁹ That famous city had suffered a decline due to the peasant revolt (1462–1472) and to certain shortcomings in the local administration. As in the cities of Aragon, the city fathers protested against the inauguration of a foreign Inquisition in Barcelona, and pointed out that persecution of the *conversos* was tantamount to the economic ruin of the city. Hardly had negotiations started between the inquisitors and the municipal authorities in this matter than many *conversos* withdrew their deposits from the municipal bank and left the city. The king of France opened his frontiers wide to the refugees and offered them most favorable terms for settlement in his realm.⁶⁰ A few *conversos* fled overseas. According to an estimate made by the municipal councillors, about 500 *converso* families fled from the city.⁶¹ This figure was probably not an over-estimation since there were *con-verso* communities of that size in Seville and Toledo. The wealthiest merchants fled. Credit and commerce de-

clined. The artisans suffered as well. Utter ruin threatened the economic life of the city. But when the heads of the municipality complained to the king, he merely said: "Before we agreed that this inquiry should be held in any of the cities of our realm, we weighed the matter well and foresaw all the losses and also the effects upon our royal rights and revenues. Since, however, our purpose and our zeal prompt us to set the service of our Lord God above our own service, we wish this inquiry to proceed, come what may, in preference to all other considerations." ⁶²

The municipal councillors made various proposals by way of submission and compromise. They suggested, *inter alia*, that the Inquisition should be subject to the supervision of the local authorities, and tried to modify its harsh rules. They even went so far as to suggest that heretics should not be handed over to the secular arm before they had had an opportunity to repent and to swear not to repeat their offenses. Heretics would thus automatically have been exempted from physical and financial penalties.⁶³ Had these proposals been accepted, the Inquisition would actually have been deprived of all power to punish *conversos*, and the servants of the Church would have had to resume their basic function of religious teachers and mentors with the duty of instructing the *conversos* by precept and example. These proposals were not, it would seem, prompted by any desire to reject the Inquisition on any pretext whatsoever, but by the intention of safeguarding the city's existent tradition of tolerance. However, the entire purpose of the Castilian Inquisition was none other than to abolish the practice of tolerance.

Torquemada's envoys entered Barcelona in July 1487, and immediately announced that they had already ruined an entire city. Barcelona would do well, they warned, to take to heart the lesson of Teruel, which had been destroyed because its inhabitants would not obey the orders of the In-

quisition.⁶⁴ Ships that were about to sail with refugees were detained in the harbor. A most intolerant religious court now began to function in Barcelona. The *conversos* took no official part in any of the negotiations between the inquisitors and the municipality. Men of Jewish descent appear not to have held office in the municipality. But it was doubtless at their request and with their approval that the municipal councillors presented the proposals outlined above. A certain resident of Barcelona, Antonio de Bardaxi by name, who headed the Catalonian department in the royal chancellory, had a short time previously signed the official order for the establishment of the Inquisition in Barcelona despite the protests of its citizens. In March 1487, a few months before the arrival of the inquisitors, this man left the city secretly, deserting the king's service and fleeing with his wife and children to France—to the amazement of his fellow-townsmen, who had always thought him a devout and faithful Christian.⁶⁵

Among those who managed to escape in time was the former secretary to John II, Juan de St. Jordi. He and his wife were burned in effigy at an "Act-of-Faith" (*Auto-de-Fé*) which took place on the 25th of January, 1488. Jaime de Casafranca, *locum tenens* of the royal treasurer of Catalonia during the reign of John II, was on friendly terms with them and led the same kind of life. He and his wife remained in Barcelona, and it was only in 1505 that they were sentenced to the stake. Some interesting facts about these *conversos* and their relation to Judaism have been preserved in the minutes of the Casafranca trial. They were not only observers of Jewish precepts, but knew the laws of the Torah and also helped spread such knowledge. While still at the royal court, they openly argued with Jews about questions of biblical exegesis. In Saragossa they attended the lectures of a Castilian rabbi on the work of "Rabbi Moses of Egypt" (Maimonides). They were also frequent guests of the Cavaller

family, a good Jewish family of Cervera. St. Jordi was accused of having preached the Jewish faith to *conversos*, of composing a book on the subject, and of having in his possession thirty foreskins of circumcised children.⁶⁶

THE INQUISITION AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HUESCA

Concerning the Inquisition's other activities, in Aragon, no particulars are known except with regard to the court set up in the cities of Lerida and Huesca shortly before the Expulsion. Records are still extant of a number of trials held in Huesca. The present writer has had an opportunity to study the records of some unique trials held in that city in 1489 and 1490. The local Jewish community was charged with having welcomed converts and penitents into its midst.⁶⁷ Such acts were of no infrequent occurrence during the "period of tolerance" prior to the Catholic reformation of Ferdinand and Isabella. It was probably not by accident that such deeds were discovered in Huesca. When, on reaching the northernmost point in Aragon, the Inquisition completed its triumphal march, it decided to teach the people a lesson that they would never forget. The main charge against the Jewish community of Huesca was that it had arranged the circumcision of a *converso*, Juan de Ciudad, some twenty-five years previously. (See p. 295.) How the inquisitors now learned about that incident is not clear; there was, however, no lack of informers in the town. A certain apostate Jew, for example, was said to have threatened—after the Jews had tried to have him consigned to the flames—that he would roast several of them by various means and would bum the whole community.⁶⁸

A considerable number of persons had been present at the circumcision of Juan de Ciudad. When it appeared that the Inquisition was about to throw its net over Aragon as well as over Castile, the Jews of Huesca were so perturbed that they began to regard one another with suspicion. It is en-

tirely probable that the local Christians knew the whole story of the *converso's* circumcision. The inquisitors had given orders that a ban should be proclaimed in the synagogue against all Jews who withheld any facts they knew about the circumcision of Christians, and the like.⁶⁹ When the ban was proclaimed, the Jews protested, declaring that they would not recognize it. They hoped thus to save their souls in the world to come; but the device did not serve to save their lives in this world.

The inquisitors called for the arrest of the surviving notables who had been present at the circumcision of the *converso*. Among the accused were leading personalities like R. Isaac Bivach, brother of R. Abraham Bivach, who had passed away in the meantime; Magister Isaac Arrondi, son of Moses Arrondi, also deceased; and R. Abraham Almosnino and R. Isaac Cocumbriel, whose grandson, Rabbi Moses Almosnino of Salonica, memorialized their martyrdom. Early in March 1489, the prosecutor brought charges against several of the suspects. At first the accused tried to deny everything, or made only partial confessions; but early in May they confessed everything, without reservations. The Jews, some of whom were now advanced in years, were men of authority in their community. Since their lives were now forfeit, they freely admitted that they had performed a religious duty when the occasion had arisen, and were ready to take the consequences. There can be no question but that their confessions were true. The inquisitors threatened them with torture after they had already confessed, and so forced them to reveal the names of other persons who had assisted at the circumcision. In some cases torture was actually employed.⁷⁰ Their testimony contains some minor inconsistencies, because the accused—some of the younger men in particular—at first tried to deny all connection with the affair, and because the notables either tried to withhold the names of living persons or retracted their testimony at the last mo-

ment in the hope of saving all the other prisoners. The verdict was given late in 1489, and the accused were burned alive. Magister Isaac Bivach alone was baptized just before his death so that he would be garroted before his body was committed to the flames.

One of the accused, R. Abraham Alitienz,⁷¹ took a line of his own. Though not a communal leader, he attracted the notice of the inquisitors for other reasons. Several years earlier his son, R. Eliezer, a young physician who was also an ordained rabbi, had formed a friendship with another young Jew, and the two had allegedly sworn by the name of God and the names of the pope, the king and the queen, to adopt Christianity within a certain period. They had committed their oath to writing in Hebrew, and had written the word “Jhesus” in Latin characters above the text. One day, while they were dancing at a wedding, the slip of paper fell out of the garments of one of them. Thereupon R. Abraham wisely sent his son away from the town so that he would not involve himself in still other follies.

As the elder Alitienz had been the beadle of the community for many years, he must have been present at the circumcision of Juan de Ciudad and his son. As sexton, it was Alitienz’s duty to flog penitents in accordance with the prescribed ritual and to conceal them in the Hospital of the aljama. He was also accused of burying *conversos* in the Jewish cemetery. His trial began only in June 1489, after all the other accused had confessed and had been executed. Alitienz, however, persisted in putting up a defense. This aged man, who was well versed in the Jewish law, and had lived as a devout Jew all his life long, denied having had anything to do with the matters in question. With the aid of the legal adviser of the court who, under the rules, acted as defense counsel for all the accused, he stubbornly attempted to disprove the whole indictment. His statement that he had not attended the circumcision was obviously untrue. He at-

tempted to indicate inconsistencies in the testimony given by the other defendants, but in so doing only involved himself in still more serious contradictions. He dubbed the hostile witnesses brethren in sin and heretics who had already been condemned by the Inquisition. His criticisms were levelled in particular at Magister Isaac Bivach, who had always been involved in quarrels with other members of the community. Alitienz argued that the descriptions of the proceedings at the circumcision were self-contradictory, and that the Talmud and the legislation derived from it prescribed no such ritual for the reception of converts. Technically speaking, he was right, because in certain respects the circumcision had been arranged in accordance not with the Jewish law, but with current medieval customs. R. Abraham Bivach, he argued, could not have begun his speech at the circumcision by referring to the commandments because he should first have spoken of the doctrine of the One God and love of the Creator. (His argument was probably based on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, Isurei biah, 14, 2.) These arguments were brushed aside by the prosecuting attorney; but, since the accused was permitted to spin out his casuistries, the prosecutor took occasion to refer to the Jews in terms that also revealed the antisemitic attitudes of circles close to the Inquisition. The Jews, asserted the prosecutor, are required by their religion to violate their oaths and to undergo torments voluntarily in order to attract proselytes and undermine Christianity and defend Judaism. Testimony given by Jews in favor of their fellow-Jews should therefore be ruled out, since all Jews are guarantors for one another and are responsible as one man for all sins—sins, that is, which they regard as religious duties. The prosecutor buttressed these arguments with passages from the Talmud quoted from various old antisemitic works and, in particular, from a new book written in 1488 by an author close to the Inquisition. (This work will be discussed presently.) The accused replied to

these slanderous statements in terms that were well-considered and reflected the self-esteem of a devout Jew. He would not attempt, he said, to refute the general allegations made by the prosecutor, since such questions had been debated on various occasions, and Jewish scholars had already given them adequate replies. He again insisted that the descriptions of the circumcision ceremony were inaccurate, and added certain arguments, which, while reflecting his expert knowledge, had no practical validity. He also criticized the prosecutor's attempt to discredit Jewish testimony, and charged him with distorting the passages which he had quoted from the Talmud and its commentators. It was an essential Jewish doctrine, he pointed out, that "The law of the land is the law." Oaths administered by government judges to Jews were binding upon them at all times and in all places. Such oaths were all the more binding when administered by the Holy Inquisition which, said he: "We are in duty bound to uphold and cherish because it is the law of the State and of the government." In this respect, "the law actually works for the good of the Jews and corresponds to what Jewish law contains."

The old sexton then illustrated his point by the following example: If, by the authority of the king, the chief rabbi and judge of all the Jews of the kingdom were to proclaim that Jews were forbidden, on pain of death, to accept proselytes owing to the dangers involved, the Jews would be in duty bound to obey his injunctions, and all who disobeyed would be liable to severe penalties. Moreover, he concluded,

if such a decree were issued by our natural lords, whose law is the law of the land, any man who disregarded that decree and took part in the public or private reception of proselytes, would be regarded as his own enemy and as the slayer of those to whom he caused injury by his conduct. It would be incumbent upon all Jews to regard him as an enemy and a transgressor of the Commandments and the cause of much evil. No Jew would have

the duty of rescuing him, and certainly not of violating his oath or giving false testimony for his sake.⁷²

Possibly, certain Jews may have concurred with these views at the time of the persecutions. The old man remained to the end what he had been all his life—a loyal Jew. Not one of his arguments contains a trace of anything that might have incriminated the other accused during their lifetime. In June 1490, he, too, was bound to the stake and burned alive like the other martyrs. The inquisitors' statements were obviously in keeping with the facts. Conversions to Judaism did take place, and penitent apostates were encouraged to revert to Judaism. It is noteworthy that the ecclesiastical judges of Huesca did not permit the prosecutor to make malicious charges, as was then customary. Nevertheless, this trial has a place in the evolution of the general strategy devised by the Inquisition shortly before the Expulsion.

DIFFERENCES AMONG THE INQUISITORS

In the meantime, the conflict, which has already been mentioned, between the advocates of "toleration" and the zealots among the inquisitors grew ever more furious. In July 1485, when the Inquisition was installed in Toledo and resentment was rising in Saragossa, Pope Innocent VIII wrote to the inquisitors in Spain that it had come to his knowledge that certain heretics, very estimable and distinguished men, were prepared to abjure on condition that they might do so in private. The pope accordingly instructed the inquisitors to arrange for their return to the Church at a private ceremony where only the king and the queen would be present. Here we have an intimation that at this time Ferdinand and his wife were inclined towards a policy of moderation, which at first, as in Andalusia and Valencia, they had flatly refused. They were clearly prepared to facilitate the return to the Church of persons closely connected with the royal court.

Several months later, the pope defined his instructions so as to authorize all tribunals of the Inquisition to receive fifty penitents privately, in the presence of the king and queen. Later, the pope added that the ceremony might take place in the absence of the sovereigns, subject only to their approval. Finally, he authorized the king and queen to suggest the names of persons to be re-admitted to the Church in private, even if they had already been placed on trial. Moreover, the pope granted permission to the sons of heretics, who had died or been condemned to retain their secular or ecclesiastical posts. Among those interested in these reforms were not only secular courtiers, like Alfonso de la Cavalleria, but bishops as well. The zealous Spanish inquisitors, however, protested on the ground that *conversos* restored to the bosom of the Church in such a fashion would not be sincerely penitent.

In November 1487, the pope was obliged to reverse himself, and admitted the inquisitors' right to try such persons even after they had confessed and sworn to sin no more. In May 1488, the pope complied with the demands of the inquisitors that all *conversos* who had enjoyed such exceptional privileges should be granted a "Period of Grace"—one month—and that thereafter they should be subject to the rigors of the law like any other defendant tried by the Castilian Inquisition. Nevertheless, the pope again confirmed the right of the king and queen in October 1488 to suggest the names of fifty persons for repentance and penances to be imposed in private. In this instance, the moderates had the upper hand because that was what was required by the national interest.⁷³

TWO POLEMICAL WORKS OF CHRISTIAN ZEALOTS

The conflict between the moderates and the generally victorious zealots on issues of religious and racial policy is reflected in two booklets written in 1488 by men close to Thomas de Torquemada.⁷⁴ Both booklets have been preserved in

a manuscript which is the handiwork of a single person. One of these booklets deals with the Talmud and its laws, the observance of those laws by the *conversos*, and the inferences following therefrom from the viewpoint of the Inquisition. This booklet is prefaced by an introduction dedicated to Torquemada by Fray Fernando de Santo Domingo, an inquisitor of Segovia, whom Torquemada later sent to Ávila to conduct the ritual-murder trial (see p. 402). In this introduction Fray Fernando addresses the inquisitor general in the words of Jeremiah 1.10 (which Pope Gregory VII and Innocent III once applied to themselves): "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." The friar asserts that the inquisitors of Segovia instructed one Antonio de Ávila (possibly the physician who later appeared as an *agent provocateur* and an expert on Jewish affairs at the ritual-murder trial) and a certain anonymous friar from the Santa Cruz monastery at Segovia, to write the booklet. These men had some smattering of knowledge of rabbinic literature. Apart from those talmudic passages commonly explicated in polemical Christian writings, the authors also quoted from Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*; the *Ba'al ha-Maor* of the "Gaon" R. Zerahia Halevi de Gerona; the *Turim* of R. Jacob b. Asher; the book *Menorath ha-Maor*; and the biblical commentary of avn Yohef (ibn Sho'eb).

According to Fr. Fernando de Santo Domingo, the booklet has a two-fold purpose. First of all, it is intended to support the inquisitors who prosecute *conversos* for observing talmudic laws, to persuade them that their duty to enforce the canonical law is more than a formality, and to demonstrate to them that all the laws in the Talmud contain overt heresies from the viewpoint of the Christian faith. *Conversos* who continue to observe these laws therefore merit the death penalty. "This Torah, which in their belief bestows life upon them

here and in the hereafter, will deprive them of their lives in this world and give them eternal death,” as the Psalmist implies (Ps. 7. 13–15).

The second purpose of the books is to allay the conscientious scruples of those who believe that men resuming their observance of the talmudic laws should be judged, not as heretics, but as persons still clinging to vestigial pagan customs, observance of the Jewish laws being only a cause for suspicion of heresy, not direct proof of heresy as such. Such an attitude, the authors hold, results from an ignorance of the nature of the Jewish commandments, the very least of which is divinely ordained and no less important than the greatest, involving as it does the entire body of Jewish doctrine. Thus, for example, it is the Jews’ belief that he who does not partake in the ritual washing of hands before a meal is as culpable as a murderer. Or again, there is a matter of *kasher* slaughtering; here the implication is that meat slaughtered by the Christian is forbidden to the Jew because the former is regarded by the latter as at heart an idolater. Yet another illustration of the close connection between ritual and dogma is the Jewish grace after meals, which includes prayers for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the restoration of the Temple service, and the future inauguration of the messianic kingdom. Obviously, the authors argue, any person who believes that the Messiah has not yet come and looks forward to returning to the Holy Land, there to perform the sacrifices of the “Old Testament,” is a complete heretic. One must therefore conclude that whoever is truly aware of the nature of these commandments will by no means acquit the practitioners thereof of the charge of heresy, unless, that is, he himself harbors impure intentions. In order correctly to appraise talmudic law, it is necessary beforehand to understand what the fundamental aims of the Talmud are. The authors of the Talmud assert that the Jewish God alone is the true God and that the Torah, which was given to Moses in both

an oral and written form, is the only true revelation; furthermore, they claim that the gods worshipped by the Gentiles are mere vanity and nothingness, particularly the God of the Christians, who is no God at all but a man—and not even a righteous man, but an idolater and sorcerer, the son not of a virgin but of a harlot. To these men the dogmas of the Christian are open folly and all his actions idolatrous.

In the first chapter of the book, the authors deal with the Oral Law. The Talmud, they say, is an integral part of the Jewish religion, and no one can be received into the Jewish faith who does not subscribe to it. Those who do not believe in the Talmud are regarded as heretics, and it is the duty of the Jews to slay them. However, the Jews do not regard the children and grandchildren of baptized Jews as heretics, but call them *anuzes* (forced converts), whom it is their duty to bring back into the Jewish fold. If *conversos* wish to believe in the Jewish religion but are unable to practice it, the Jews do not kill them, because they are forced converts. Even if they do not wish to believe in the Torah, the Jews will not kill them since they are like forced converts, but labor to win them back to Judaism. It is, therefore, permissible for the inquisitors to accept Jewish testimony detrimental to *conversos*, as they are bound by their laws to save and not to kill *conversos*. The authors thereby attempted to refute an opinion transmitted to the sovereigns, namely, that testimony given by Jews was not to be relied upon because they hated the *conversos* and sought their lives. This was one of the minor points of contention between the moderates and the extremists in regard to the laws of the Inquisition, and it is dealt with in the book only in passing.

The second chapter of the book is concerned with the abuse of Jesus and his followers found in the Talmud and rabbinic literature. The third chapter contains the text of the bull issued by Pope Benedict XIII and his decree against the Talmud. In the fourth chapter, the authors try to prove that the

whole Talmud is pervaded by hostility to Christianity, an opinion current since the days of Nicholas Donin, who held that after the rise of Christianity, the talmudic sages, in order to forestall further conversions, made scurrilous statements about the new religion and branded it as paganism. So that their sons would not learn from the Christians, they forbade them to follow their ways; and hence they refer to Christians as aliens and the like. The authors then proceed to analyze each and every one of the commandments so as to demonstrate that all of them are permeated with anti-Christian sentiment, and that all directly or indirectly negate Christian doctrine. The Jews believe that forced converts will enjoy life in the hereafter by keeping any commandment whatsoever if they are unable to keep all the commandments. If they are not able to keep all of them, or if they do not keep them at all, the will is taken for the deed. In the last chapter, the authors cite additional proofs from the works of Christian theologians and canonical writers to support their thesis that observance of the Jewish commandments amounts to heresy. Finally, the conclusion is drawn that those who keep such commandments cannot plead ignorance of the essential facts. Every Christian is expected to know that it is forbidden to keep these commandments; even the *conversos* know it. In this way the authors of the book tried to dispel the doubts of the “tolerationists” and, in fact, despite all their misrepresentations, they achieved their purposes.

The second booklet is forthright antisemitic propaganda. It is of particular interest because, as already mentioned, it was written by someone close to Torquemada. The writer undertakes to describe the *alborayco*, a term of contempt for any *converso* in the province of Leon. In his definition, an *alborayco* is a Jew who converted to Christianity under duress at the time of the widespread persecutions. The non-baptized Jews call them “forced converts,” (*anussim*), so as to differentiate them from voluntary apostates (*meshum-*

madim). When a Jew comes to a place where there are such persons, he inquires: "Are you a forced convert or an apostate?" If the answer is "a forced convert," he is given presents and treated with great respect. But if he says, "I am an apostate," nothing more is said to him. The forced converts practice circumcision after the manner of the Moslems and observe the Sabbath in the Jewish fashion; there is nothing Christian about them but their names. They are not Moslems, not Jews, and not Christians. They wish to be Jews, but are unable to keep all the commandments. Hence they are called *alboraycos*, a word which the author says is derived from Alborayque, the fabled horse on which, according to the legend, Mohammed ascended to Heaven. Like that horse, the *conversos* have peculiar characteristics: the maw of a wolf, the face of a horse, and so on. They are cheats and false prophets. Though 1488 years have passed since the coming of the true Messiah, the *conversos* declare that he will soon come to Seville or Lisbon in the guise of a wealthy knight riding in a golden chariot. They migrate to the lands of the Turk to help him shed the blood of Christians. They return to the ways of their fathers like a dog returning to his vomit. They resemble the high-bred horse (*facanea*): just as he is unfit to plough the hard mountain soil, so the *alboraycos* are unfit to fight the foes of Christianity or to do the work of peasants. Instead, they move about the royal court, the streets and marketplaces to cheat the Gentiles. To them apply the words of Isaiah (59.6): "Their works are works of iniquity," for their work is valueless. They do not make good priests because they are heretics, nor good soldiers because they are dishonest, nor good farmers or laborers because they are lazy. Their handiwork is worthless: "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall men cover themselves with their works." The cloth they produce is unfit for wear. They fill their bellies, and have no concern but for the goods of this world. Like serpents, they spread the venom of heresy throughout the

land. They resemble cranes: If one of them is touched, all the rest cry out “g’ru, g’ru!” Like the cranes, which are easily frightened and run to hide themselves, so the *alboraycos* tremble in the midst of Christians; just as the crane covers herself with her feathers to protect herself from her enemies, so they defend themselves with money and bribes; just as the cranes come in the wintertime and return to their native land after having caused much damage, so the *conversos* came as captives to Spain and inflicted much harm upon the Spaniards, and yet they yearn to go back to Judaea, praying, “Lord, deliver us from the Christians and bring us back as free men to our own land, the land of Judah!” Like peacocks, they flaunt the wealth and honors they have acquired for themselves, but they need only look at their feet (that is, to recall their humble origin). Just as Mohammed’s Alborayque has hoofs of iron to kick with, so the *conversos* trample the Christians underfoot, and plunge them into debt and enslave them in all manner of servitude, so that the Christians groan under so much robbery and spoliation, such as is described in the satirical portrait of Diego Arias de Ávila—may his name and his memory be blotted out!—the “Coplas de Mingo Revulgo.” The *alboraycos* live by plunder. They rob the churches, buy the priestly offices and capture the monastic orders. They seize the tax-farming and the administrative posts from the kings and rulers of the country, and make illegal contracts so as to increase the revenues of the State, robbing the widows and the orphans and taking from the rich everything possible and from the poor more than they owe. Just as Mohammed’s horse has a lion’s foot without a hoof, so the Jews—who trace their ancestry to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin which were taken captive and sold into slavery by Vespasian and Titus—have nothing left but their pride of ancestry without the strength of the hoof, that is to say, the power of a State. They will not have a king of the tribe of Judah until the end of days, when they will acknowledge Jesus Christ as

their king. But before that happens, the Turks will come to Italy, as it is foretold in the Book of Daniel. In Constantinople the prophecy of the Targum on Lamentations 4.21 will be fulfilled. In the wars of Gog and Magog (as related in Ezek. 38–39), the Jews and the Moslems and the forced converts and all the bad Christians will be destroyed together.

After this eschatological interlude, which is modelled on the *Fortalitium Fidei* or on Hebrew prophecies heard from Jews, the author continues his portrayal of the *conversos*. They say to the Christians, “We are Christians,” and to the Jews they say “We are Jews!” They eat Christian and Moslem food, except pork, and the *adafina* (Jewish Sabbath roast), and do not keep the Christian or Moslem or Jewish fasts. It was they who introduced the sin of Sodom into the world, which was then transmitted by the Jews to the Moslems, and by the Moslems to the bad Christians and to their Diego Arias (may his memory be blotted out!), who was the cause of the evils that befell Spain for that transgression. Just as Alborayque’s stirrup is made of a variety of metals, so the *conversos* are of varied origins and characteristics, and the blood of another race is interfused in them. In Old Castile, Burgos, Palencia, Valladolid, Leon, and Zamora, hardly any of the *conversos* are heretics; but in the Kingdoms of Toledo, Murcia, and in all Andalusia and Extremadura, hardly a believing Christian is to be found in their midst. All the heretical doctrines—the various philosophical creeds, the denial of belief in reward and punishment in the hereafter, the schismatic views of the Jewish sects in the period of the Second Temple, and the talmudic faith inherited by the *conversos* from their fathers—have all gained currency among them. However, Alborayque is fitted with a bridle of flame and his reins are swords of steel. Likewise, the bridle of flames from the stake now curbs the *conversos*, and cruel death by the sword will follow in fulfillment of the saying (apocryphal) of St. Isidorus of Seville: “In Spain heresy will

arise from among those who crucified Jesus. That heresy will continue for seventy years, and at the end of seventy years they will be destroyed by fire and sword.” “Thus endeth the last chapter of Alborayque!”

In this antisemitic pamphlet, which was doubtless written simultaneously with the reference booklet discussed above by someone close to the inquisitors of the Santa Cruz monastery at Segovia, the religious and racial hostility of the lowest classes is fused with the malice of the members of the anti-semitic *cancioneros* and with the eschatological reforming zeal of the mendicant friars. The force of the spirit which had moved Alfonso de Espina thirty years earlier when he wrote his *Fortalitium Fidei*, now enabled Torquemada and his supporters to defeat the advocates of toleration; and it was that same spirit which inspired the racial and religious policies of the inquisitors, first and last. Before these two pamphlets were written, vulgar and unbridled antisemitism influenced the procedure of the tribunals only in rare and passing instances. Generally speaking, up to that time the inquisitors had usually taken pains, according to their lights, to proceed in accordance with the rules of law and justice, demonstrating facts which were unquestionably correct and refraining from malicious libels. Now, however, they began conducting a trial, from beginning to end, on the basis of the vilest slanders which emanated solely from the imaginations of medieval antisemites.

“THE HOLY CHILD OF LA GUARDIA”

Partial records from the trial of the case of “the holy child of La Guardia” (1490–1491) were discovered about seventy years ago, and have been subjected by modern scholarship to a rigorous and, for the most part, accurate analysis. Since that time, however, new information has come to light both on the period in general and on the role played by this trial in the last stirring chapter of the history of the Jews in

Spain. Consequently, it would be impossible not to review the matter here in detail.⁷⁵

Some very important facts can be gathered from the testimony of one of the accused given on the 9th of April, 1491, which we shall consider further on. Early in the month of June, 1490, in the city of Astorga, a *converso* by the name of Benito García, a native of La Guardia in the province of Toledo, and an itinerant laborer and wool-washer, was arrested and brought before Doctor Pedro de Villada, who was filling the place of the bishop of Astorga. From remarks made later on in the course of the trial, we can establish that he was immediately put to severe torture and compelled to confess to the false accusations made against him. But the only available confession of Benito's which dates from this time (June 6, 1490),⁷⁶ lists as his sole crime an attraction to Judaism. Nearly five years previously—that is, in 1485, the year the Inquisition was established in Toledo—Benito García had begun to renew his connections with the Jewish religion, both in practice and in matters of belief. Among those who had encouraged him to take this step, Benito mentioned a certain *converso* and fellow townsman, Juan de Ocaña, and the members of a Jewish family named Franco, which hailed from the neighboring village of Tembleque. The official records of the trial of the last of these, Yuce Franco, have been preserved in their entirety.

In the scene that follows, according to the chronology of the records, the reader is transported to the Inquisition's jail in Segovia, on or shortly before July 19, 1490. A young shoemaker by the name of Yuce Franco is incarcerated there. He feels ill—perhaps out of worry and fear. The inquisitors send him a doctor, one Antonio de Ávila by name, perhaps the man who in 1488 helped to compose the antisemitic booklet of which we have spoken (see above, p. 391). Yuce makes the request, which he asks this man to relay to the inquisitors, that a Jew be sent to him “who might recite the things which

are customarily said by Jews at the time of their death.” A monk named Alonso Enríquez then enters dressed as a Jew and introduces himself as Rabbi Abraham. Yuce asks him to inform the Rabbi Don Abraham Seneor that he, together with others from his village, has been imprisoned because of a boy (*nahar*) who had been killed about eleven years ago, during the holy week, in place of “that man” (*oto hays*). The content of this conversation was brought to the knowledge of the court by the testimony (confirmed by oath) of Antonio de Ávila, on July 19, 1490. The same story is given, with minor variations, in the testimony of Fray Alonso Enríquez in Segovia, on October 26, 1490. This man had visited Yuce Franco a second time in prison—so he testified—some eight or ten days later, but found him very much changed, for Yuce was now greatly afraid of Antonio de Ávila (who apparently was present during the visit).⁷⁷

It is understandable that Yuce should have wished to inform Don Abraham Seneor of his imprisonment. Don Abraham was then residing in Segovia, and his official position and standing made it incumbent upon him to protect his coreligionists. Whether or not he was able to intervene in this particular instance is, however, not known to us. It is also obvious why Yuce Franco should have spoken the incriminating words “boy” and “that man” in Hebrew. He knew he was being libellously accused of some act. The inquisitors registered this conversation as an admission of guilt on the prisoner’s part.

In Segovia, on October 27, 1490, further testimony was extorted from Yuce Franco. He stated that some three years ago he went to a place named La Guardia, to buy flour for Passover, and that he was told that the *converso* Alonso Franco could sell him some, and that when he arrived there, the *converso* started to ask him, the Jew, questions about Passover, revealing on his own account that once, on holy Friday (*viemes de la cruz*), he had brought home “*un carnero*,” but had not eaten it because he had found it to be *trefe*; and—to

add further to this strange story—Alonso Franco mentioned to him that he and his brother had once, on another holy Friday, crucified a boy in the same manner as the Jews had crucified Jesus Christ.⁷⁸ This testimony seemed to reveal further facts needed to confirm the terrible accusation. Meanwhile—in reality somewhat too late—a competent inquisitional tribunal was set up to deal with this case.

On August 27, 1490, in the Monastery Santo Tomás near Ávila, the inquisitor general himself signed an order⁷⁹ which concerned the men imprisoned who were now mentioned by name: Alonso Franco, Lope Franco, García Franco and Juan Franco, *converso* residents of La Guardia; Yuce Franco, a Jewish resident of Tembleque; Moses Abenamias, a Jewish resident of Zamora; and Juan de Ocaña and Benito García, *converso* residents of La Guardia. They were arraigned on the charges of heresy, heterodoxy, and specific crimes against the Catholic faith. In this order, Torquemada notified the inquisitors in Ávila that, in order to clarify the prisoners' status, he was having them transferred from Segovia to Ávila; he himself, he wrote, was occupied with other important matters and would have no opportunity to conduct the trial personally. Indeed, it is a fact that at this time Torquemada was extended an invitation to the royal court in Andalusia. But why should he have thought of conducting the trial himself? And why were the prisoners initially brought to Segovia, when jurisdiction over the case belonged to the court in Toledo, the capital of the native province of the accused? In fact, in order to do so it was necessary to request of the archbishop of Toledo—after the procedures in Ávila were already under way—that he relinquish his rightful prerogatives to judge the case.⁸⁰ What could have been the reason for assuming such irregular tactics? Was it possibly that in Toledo there did not exist the atmosphere of religious fanaticism without which the trial could not be held? And why was the trial not retained for Segovia, but rather transferred to Ávila? Was the interven-

tion of Don Abraham Seneor responsible for this? We happen to have in our possession a letter written by the inquisitor general on August 17 to the residents of Torquemada, the village whose name he bore. He informs them that he has spoken with Don Abraham Seneor about the farming of the village's taxes, and that Don Abraham promised him in future years he would undertake to work for the benefit of the residents of his—the inquisitor's—birthplace.⁸¹ Perhaps Torquemada had in turn assured the powerful Don Abraham that he would at least remove the trial from the vicinity of the city and community in which the latter lived?

The inquisitors whom Torquemada sent to Ávila to conduct the trial were men of considerable experience. They were: the Doctor Pedro de Villada, who had entered the field several weeks prior to this in Astorga; the licentiate Juan López de Cigales, who in 1487 was appointed inquisitor in Valencia,⁸² and Fray Fernando de Santo Domingo, the author of an introduction to the well-known antisemitic book discussed above (p. 391), which was written in 1488. It was Fernando de Santo Domingo who questioned the first witnesses when the trial opened in Segovia.

On December 17, 1490, the inquisitorial trial of Yuce Franco began in Ávila. The chief prosecutor accused Yuce Franco of attempting to convert Christians (*conversos*) to Judaism and of participating in the crucifixion of a Christian child on Holy Friday. Yuce and his accomplices, the charge continued, had plotted to steal the sacramental host and, with the assistance of sorcerers, to perform over it and the heart of a Christian child a sort of magical communion (*comulgar*) on the Passover (*pascua de pan cenceño*), the purpose of which was to have been to murder all the Christians by infecting them with rabies. The intention of the perpetrator of this act was

that the Law of Moses should be increasingly honored and observed, and that its commandments, ordinances and rites should be performed in greater freedom: and

that the religion of the Christians should be destroyed and annihilated completely and that the possessions of faithful Catholics should be inherited by them; and that no man should oppose their wickedness and error, so that their seed should multiply throughout the land and the seed of faithful Christians should be entirely uprooted.⁸³

The ground for this accusation had already been prepared. Confessions having to do with the theft of a host and crucifixion had been obtained from Benito García and Yuce Franco, and perhaps from the other prisoners as well. It would appear that the accused offered partial confessions and incriminated others in the hope that by so doing they might escape from the trap set for them by the Inquisition.

But from whence truly this horrible accusation against a young artisan, an accusation the likes of which had never before been heard before an inquisitorial court? There can be no doubt that it derived originally from the antisemitic literature of the previous age, and not from the prisoners' confessions. The inquisitors of Segovia and Ávila found the material for their accusation in Alfonso de Espina's *Fortalitium Fidei* and in the other propagandistic and antisemitic books of the Middle Ages. Jewish literature and modes of thought can yield no clue in this matter. To be sure, the Jews hated the Inquisition profoundly. Moreover, throughout the medieval period there were Jews as well as Christians who practiced magic with various ends, some innocent, some not so innocent, in mind. Thus, it is not inconceivable that Jewish "hierophants" should have banded together for the purpose of magically warding off some portentous evil. Yet, even so, it is utterly out of the question that they should have made use of Christian ritual objects, or that they should have allowed the participation of *conversos* , who were not regarded as Jews and were not even circumcised.

These things have to be said in order to provide some psychological background for the charge and to give some sense

to the criminal plot attributed to the accused of this trial. One thing should be clear: murder for ritual or magical purposes was a crime utterly outside any conception of a Jewish person. The proceedings of our trial do not show anything but the way such accusations and lawsuits were fabricated. The trial's sole design was publicly to dramatize and enact Alfonso de Espina's propagandistic fabrications. In the course of our analysis of the trial, the pertinent details will speak for themselves.

When the charge had been read to Yuce Franco he cried out loud that it was "the greatest lie in the world." The official attorney for the defense answered the accusation with a formal rebuttal, but did not get to the heart of the matter. The right granted to the accused to defend himself was purely illusory.

On April 9 and 10, 1491—that is, after a lapse of approximately four months—Yuce Franco was permitted to speak before the inquisitors. He gave on these days two contradictory sets of testimony.

On April 9, 1491, Yuce Franco, brought before the Inquisitors, made certain innocent declarations which are incompatible with the assertions that the prosecution set out to prove. It will be of value, therefore, to deal with these first.⁸⁴

Yuce Franco told of how he had struck up a conversation with Benito García, who occupied the cell below his own in the Inquisition's jail in Ávila. Benito asks: "Jew, have you some sort of needle you can give me?" Yuce replies that all he has in his possession is a shoemaker's needle. After explaining that he is in the cell below, Benito informs Yuce that his father, Don Ça (Isaac) Franco, is also in prison—a fact which was known to Benito but not to Yuce because the inquisitors had arranged a meeting between the former and Isaac Franco. Next, Yuce inquires of Benito who he is, and Benito reveals his name and touches upon the circumstances of his imprisonment: it was the devil's doing. "That dog of a

doctor” (Pedro de Villada) has administered to him in Astorga two-hundred lashes and a water torture, and, yet another evening, two thumbscrews, until he was forced to make a confession that would suffice to have him burned.⁸⁵ When Yuce began to play upon the fiddle (*vihuela*), Benito cried out from below: “Don’t play! Have pity on your father, for the inquisitors told me they would burn him little by little.”⁸⁶ Yuce inquired if Benito was a *converso*, and the latter answered that he was, that he had once been a Jew in bad luck (*en ora mala*), that he would like Yuce to include him in his prayers so that the Creator would release him from his imprisonment, even though assistance would find it difficult to come, because he had confessed under torture to more than he knew.

On the following Sunday, when Yuce was reciting the morning service which begins with the prayer *Elohay Neshama* (“Lord, the soul Thou hast instilled in me is pure”), Benito asked him to pray for him. On the same day, after the meal, Benito remarked that the inquisitors were “devils,”⁸⁷ and when Yuce protested against his use of the term, he grew stubborn: I say that they are worse than antichrists. The antichrist, he continued, is a Jew who converted to Christianity; his—Benito’s—father had cursed him “like the legs of the snake,”⁸⁸ and the curse had stuck to him because he had chosen evil and rejected the good. He was acquainted with evil, having lived with it for forty years. Now that he realized what was good and what evil, he wished to get out “of there.” The only good deed he could remember having performed was preventing a Jewish boy from converting by saying to him: “You see how they burn them, and you want to become a Christian?” Then he fed him and sent him to Ocaña—a place famous for its Jewish learning—so that he should not convert.

Benito told Yuce that he wished that all the prisoners who came from his province could be freed, and that he might suffer in their stead: “And through all this he placed his soul at

the disposal of his Maker.” He further said that the doings of the Inquisition were unjust, that they were part of a plan to burn “them” and expropriate their possessions, and that the inquisitors were out to get him—Benito—and more than thirty others. He swore by the eyes in his head that henceforth he would admit absolutely nothing, for the testimony he had given had already doomed him body and soul. “They” imprison people on account of their property, and for no other reason. If he were ever to be released, he would go to the Land of Judaea.

Benito asked Yuce for a knife to circumcise himself with, because it was bandied about that he was not circumcised.⁸⁹ When Yuce advised him against this, lest he might die, Benito repeated that he would at least die with the devil, and that he preferred this to being burned. If news of his imprisonment would reach Peña, the commandant of the La Guardia fortress, the latter would intervene with the queen to have him freed. Even though he was stupid, he added, neither Yuce nor any of the others would be burned. He—Benito—would not be attached to the Jew, Yuce Franco, for “he placed his soul at the disposal of his Maker.”

Later he remarked: They say that on a day like this ⁹⁰ the Virgin Mary beheld her son, and that he was God. But he, Benito García, says that God has no mother and is nobody’s son, and believes only in the Creator of heaven and earth; all else is idolatry. The sacramental host (*hostia*) is also said to be God. Earlier, Benito García had inquired why it was that the Jews fasted on “the great day” (*el día mayor*), and was told by Yuce that it was a day of repentance. He also wished to know the meaning of the *alihakoneni*⁹¹ which the Jews recited in their prayers on Saturday night. Yuce explained that on this night the Jews offer certain blessings to God and make the benediction of separation (*havdalah*) between the Sabbath and the days of the week. Then Benito asked why the Jews wore *tafelines* (phylacteries), and Yuce

answered that this was God's commandment. "And through all this Benito placed his soul at the disposal of his Maker."

Benito García then said: See what a miracle it is, even the stones observe the Sabbath. When he was asked by Yuce to what he was referring, he replied: to the river of stones which stops on the Sabbath. He wanted to know the meaning of "Zion," and Yuce told him that this was the site on which the Temple was built.

Yuce Franco asked Benito García why he was called by that name; Benito replied that when water was forced up his nose while he was being tortured in Astorga, he lost his faith in Jesus and expelled him from Christendom (*lo avian deschristianado*). Afterwards, on a certain Friday, when his meal was not brought to him on time—it being the day of a black fast—Benito García said that perhaps the devil had a hand in what was brought to him [?]. He also said that the prior of Santa Cruz was the greatest antichrist (*que el prior de Santa Cruz era el antecristo mayor*), and that in case Yuce Franco should be freed from prison, he would request him to get in touch with Peña, the commandant of the fortress, whose intervention might obtain the freedom of all the prisoners from his province. He also stated that the fathers (inquisitors) had shown him a draft of the accusation against him which was "longer than two days." He felt sorry only for his small children, who would continue to belong to an accursed religion. To make the host (*hostia*), he said, they mix a little flour with water and call it God. When Yuce asked whether Benito had lived in the past as a Jew or as a Christian, the latter replied that his life resembled on oak tree: it only yielded fruit after being beaten. He had remained obdurate even though God had informed him of everything. Once he had gone to Santiago to see the devils (*los diablos*, that is, the Catholic saints), but God had told him: I will bring you to a place where you shall recognize me (*Yo te pondré donde me conozcas*).

On the next day, April 10th, Yuce Franco testified again. Benito García, he said, like himself, had observed three fasts while in prison: Mondays, Thursdays, and the Fast of Esther. Benito also remarked that the whiplashes he received in Astorga were in punishment for the beatings he had given his children to make them attend church; that the fleas and lice which had eaten him there were for the coins he had donated for the souls in purgatory; and that because he had put money in the basin for the holy water for the Church, he had been subjected to the water torture in Astorga. Yuce also heard Benito remark that he had never in his life seen a god being born.

When pieced together, the confidences which Benito García spontaneously communicated to his fellow prisoner comprise the story of a simple man caught up in the grim religious struggle of those horrible times. Benito García grew up and lived in a Jewish and *converso*) working-class milieu. He was born a Jew, converted, and eventually sought a way back, as did many *conversos* and apostates (*anussim* and *meshummadim*), particularly in an age of heightened inquisitorial activity. In the course of this spiritual conflict he made, it would seem, one last effort to dispel his doubts; and so he journeyed to Santiago, in order to visit the shrines of the Christian saints. It was there that his faith in the Catholic Church was completely shaken. We may reasonably assume that upon his return from Santiago he was arrested and jailed in Astorga; indeed, this episode is one of the events mentioned in the trial whose factual veracity has been established beyond a doubt. Benito García's naive narration was now retold by Yuce Franco to his judges with a meticulousness not uncommon to those whose cases were tried by the Inquisition. It is inconceivable that Yuce Franco's straightforward account could have been a product of his imagination. How different this performance was from the testimonies later given by the accused to their judges. At the time, Yuce

Franco still did not dare to attribute to his friend the slightest insinuation regarding conjuring with the host or the crucifixion of a child. Benito García was worlds away from committing or even thinking about such acts. For him, the Inquisition and the Catholic Church were hideous monsters from which he desired only to escape, in order to return to the pure faith of his childhood. He had no knowledge of any plans of revenge from the enemies of the Jews.

The inquisitors, for their part, did not lack methods for extorting the desired confessions. On the same day (April 9, 1491) on which Yuce Franco recited the facts mentioned above—as was stated previously, we have no way of knowing whether this took place before or after the testimony quoted above was given—the inquisitors visited Yuce Franco in his cell, in order to hear from him the revelations they hoped for. The following statement was made by Yuce Franco:⁹² Some three years prior to the most recent new year (that is, on January 1, 1488, unless he had the Jewish New Year in mind) Yuce Franco was told by the Jewish physician and resident of Tembleque, Maestre Yuça Tazarte (who had in the meantime passed away), that he—the doctor—had requested Benito García of La Guardia, now imprisoned by the Inquisition in Ávila, to bring him a sacramental host from a church. Benito García, the story continues, stole the keys to the church of La Guardia, hid them by the bank of the Tajo river, and gave the host to Maestre Yuça. On Christmas day of 1488, Benito himself was arrested by the local magistrates and held for a period of two days. According to what Maestre Yuça told Yuce Franco, the host was required “to make a rope with certain knots” (*para faser una cuerda con ciertos nudos*) with which to perform a magical act, as was stated explicitly in later testimony. Maestre Yuça presented this rope, together with a letter, to Yuce Franco, and instructed him to deliver them to the Toledo physician, Rabbi Peres. Yuce fulfilled this mission, but knew nothing at all of what

had been done in the meanwhile with the host. The only others to be informed about the incident were Yuce Franco's brother Moses, now dead, and the imprisoned *converso*), Alonso Franco.

On the following day, April 10, 1491, Yuce Franco testified again⁹³ before the inquisitors (*en la sala de audiencia*)—once more without referring to his conversations with Benito García. Relating what he had heard from his brother, Moses Franco, he told how four years previously (in approximately 1487) his brother, the late Maestre Yuça, Alonso, Juan and García Franco, and Benito García had entered into a conspiracy (*concierto*) for the purpose of obtaining a host and thereby (that is, through magic) rendering the Christian judges and inquisitors powerless to act against them. When Moses Franco invited his brother Yuce to join the conspiracy, the latter excused himself on the grounds that he would soon be travelling to Murcia. The host, Moses told him, was already in their possession. Yuce added that approximately two years before his arrest, in 1489, he was informed by Moses that he—Moses—and Maestre Yuça Tazarte had gone to Tembleque in order to conspire again with the above-mentioned *conversos* in regard to obtaining a second host and performing more magic.

Yuce Franco's confessions of April 9th and 10th, 1491, form the first chapters of a terrible drama which, in accordance with the inquisitorial plan, was to unfold in its entirety step by step. Even in these early remarks there are open indications of the contradictions which were to become increasingly apparent in the confessions that followed, and there is no need to examine each one of these in its every detail. The method and psychology behind these confessions are clear to see: by issuing a partial confession and at the same time incriminating his co-defendants, each of the accused sought to save himself; the end result, however, was that he only succeeded in involving himself further, particularly since each

of his partners was engaged in applying the identical stratagem. In the final analysis, the accused men—simple artisans—are portrayed in their confessions as being nothing more than agents for a number of highly educated representatives of Spanish Jewry. Historians have to date been unable to unearth from the many documents of this period the names of the two Jewish physicians. The inquisitors themselves, however, showed little interest in these men. They indicted neither of them, whether in person or posthumously, as was their custom, and did not even attempt to determine whether they or the deeds of which they were suspected ever had any basis in reality. Their policy was simply to regard as true the utterances extracted from a small number of poor, downtrodden, uneducated men who had been incarcerated for a year-and-a-half and completely cut off from both the outside world and the Jewish community.

The testimony that followed was taken at intervals of several weeks. On Saturday, the 7th of May, 1491, Yuce Franco identified a cave near the village of La Guardia as the site of the conspirators' rendezvous.⁹⁴ On the 9th of June, he announced that from an exchange of words between Maestre Yuça, and his brother, Moses Franco, he had learned that the magic was performed through the media of both the host and the heart of a Christian child.⁹⁵ On the 19th of July, 1491, Yuce Franco began his statement to the inquisitors with an apology for not having confessed all at the outset and a plea for the surety of his and his father's lives. When the judges queried why he did not tell the whole truth to begin with, he gave as the reason an oath taken by him and his accomplices not to reveal anything until a year of their imprisonment had passed (an alibi which cannot possibly be regarded as truthful).⁹⁶ Yuce then proceeded to outline a version of the crime which was different from the previous versions, and which, as circumstances changed, was to undergo still more variations, both on his part and the part of others. The time

of the deed was approximately three years before (1488); the place was the cave; those present were: Yuce, his father Isaac, the late Moses Franco, the late Maestre Yuça, a Jew by the name of David de Perejon—apparently an unfortunate Jew who lived in one of the neighboring villages—and the *conversos* Juan de Ocaña, Benito García, and the Franco brothers. Yuce himself was there only as an eye-witness.

At this meeting, Yuce testified, Alonso Franco gave the host and the heart of the Christian child to Maestre Yuça, who, upon taking them, retreated by himself to the corner of the cave and performed a spell whereby the inquisitors would be powerless to harm the conspirators, or, if they did attempt to take action, would be struck mad for a year. Approximately a year later, in 1489, the conspirators met again and decided to send Benito García with a host and a letter in Hebrew to a Jew named Moses Abenamias in Zamora. (The two physicians having failed to successfully carry out the conjuring, it remained for Moses Abenamias, who was reputed to be an extremely proficient sorcerer, to finish the job;⁹⁷ like the physicians, Moses Abenamias was never brought to trial, and it has yet to be determined whether such a man ever existed at all.) Yuce Franco was unable to tell his questioners whether Benito García had fulfilled his mission to Zamora or not; Benito did mention, though, that on his way to Santiago and on the return trip via Astorga he was arrested by Pedro de Villada.⁹⁸ Some further details, none of major significance, were added on this occasion.

On the evening of the same day, Yuce testified about the actual crucifixion of the Christian child.⁹⁹ The accused assembled in the cave. They brought the child, crucified and abused him, and cursed him to his face—all in the sequence which is narrated in the Gospels and in Christian apocryphal literature, and which was re-enacted in the popular morality plays of the Middle Ages. Everyone performed his proper task, including Yuce Franco, who now incriminated himself

too. It was only when he came to his own father that the frail light of human conscience penetrated Yuce's "confession"; he stammeringly conceded that he could not remember whether Don Ça Franco, who had already reached his eightieth year, had done or said anything at all, but could only confirm that he was present. The location of the child's grave, which was in the bed of the Escorchon River near La Guardia, was known to Yuce only by hearsay. The heart remained in the possession of Alonso Franco until the time when all the members of the group reconvened in the cave in order for Maestre Yuça to perform his spell with the heart and the host. This occurred during Lent. When Yuce Franco was asked by the inquisitors whether there had been at this time any report of a missing Christian child, he replied that several Christian children had indeed been reported missing from nearby villages, but that the Franco brothers might just as well have obtained the child in the course of their trip to Murcia. A fragment from the testimony of old Ça Franco, which was given on the 20th of July, 1491, and treats the same matters that Yuce had dealt with on the previous day, is to be found, for some unknown reason, in an entirely different section of the protocol. Of his son Yuce, Isaac said that he had given the child but "a small blow."¹⁰⁰

The inquisitors were still not satisfied with the results they had obtained, and they redoubled their efforts to extract additional confessions from the prisoners. On the 28th of July, 1491, Yuce Franco testified about the remarks made by the conspirators on the occasion of their meeting to send Benito García to Zamora with a letter for Moses Aben-amias.¹⁰¹ One of the *conversos* present praised the letter by saying that its value was inestimably higher than that of those letters which were purchased at great expense from the pope in Rome. To this another replied that nevertheless the *conversos* could not dispense completely with the receipt of ecclesiastical letters and from keeping other socio-religious

practices common to Christians, because this might attract the attention of neighbors and arouse suspicion among their Christian wives. And someone else added: "All this is nonsense, for there is no savior but the one God" (*Todo es buria, que non ay otro Salvador salvo el Dio*). Such an expression of pure monotheistic faith, the likes of which were habitual with the *conversos*, openly rejects faith in the host, an object which would not have been credited by them with any power whatever either for good or for evil.

On August 1, 1491, Yuce Franco testified further about the conversations which took place between him and Benito García in prison.¹⁰² He asserted that these talks had the approval of the inquisitors, and that they were made possible by means of a hole bored through the ceiling which separated the two cells (it is not clear what need there was at this point to inform the inquisitors of something which they presumably already knew about). In contrast to the naive testimony of the 9th and 10th of April, he now portrayed himself as an agent for the Inquisition, charged with the task, as it were, of prying into Benito's inmost secrets. Yuce asked Benito about the outcome of his errand with the host. On one occasion Benito retorted that it fell into a river, and on another, that he gave it to a Jew in Zamora. When Yuce continued to press him for an answer, he told the story of how, while he was stopping at an inn in Astorga, some drunken men appeared, searched his bag, discovered the host, and accused him of being a heretic (*hereje*). As a result, he was thrown into jail, where he was given two-hundred lashes, tortured, and finally turned over to Doctor de Villada, the provisor of Astorga. Then he was forced to admit to things of which he didn't even know, until his confession was enough to burn him.—At first glance, Yuce Franco was only repeating here the actual statements he had heard from Benito García as far back as the beginning of April; the fact of the matter is, however, that he was already engaged in accommodating the

truth to the pattern of fabrications in which he had been instructed.—When Yuce persisted in his inquiry, Benito stated emphatically that he had nothing more to say. Their conversation then touched on such subjects as the observance of the Jewish commandments by *converso* women of the birthplaces of the accused—commonplace matters which do not concern us here.

On August 1, Yuce Franco was forced to give further witness to “clear up” the problem as to where the plotters got the child that was meant to be crucified.¹⁰³ Once more, his account grows muddled. While the crucifixion was being performed, Yuce now related, Maestre Yuça Tazarte inquired of the conspirators whence they had obtained the child. Juan Franco’s reply was: from a place that will never be found out. When Yuce Franco was asked by the inquisitor whether he wished to offer any conjecture of his own, he replied that the kidnappers could conceivably have found the child in the course of their frequent journeys. Yuce then proceeded to recount some interesting details from the lives of Jewish and *converso* villagers. The late David de Perejon and some other persons, he said, made it their practice to come to Tembleque for the Jewish New Year (*fiesta del cuerno*) and the Feast of Tabernacles, in order to pray with the congregation and blow the *shofar*. The two *converso* brothers from the Franco family gave him money to buy a *shofar* and came to hear it blown; they also sat with David in the *succah*, joined him in reciting the benediction, fasted on the day of the “great fast,” and purchased oil to light the synagogue in Ocaña.

This sort of behavior, which was not at all uncommon among the *conversos*, is here given an additional significance of its own: Yuce testified that the above events, describing how certain *conversos* observed Jewish traditions, took place six years before, that is, in 1485, the year the Inquisition began its activities in Toledo. Following this digression,

which bears the full imprint of the truth, Yuce Franco went back to expanding upon the principal accusation. At the time of the incident in the cave, Maestre Yuça Tazarte made all the conspirators swear to reveal nothing until a year of imprisonment at the hands of the Inquisition had gone by; he also stipulated that if anyone was forced to submit a confession under duress (*en tormentos*), he would be expected to recant as soon as the tortures were over. This, Yuce contended, was the reason why he and his father had hitherto concealed part of the truth; now that thirteen months had elapsed since the date of their imprisonment, they were no longer bound by the oath or “ban.” As we have already seen, Yuce made use of this argument as far back as the 19th of July. Although the Inquisition’s reliance upon torture is mentioned here for the first time in the course of the trial, it is highly doubtful whether at least some of the testimony given up to this point was not the product of physical compulsion.

On the 24th of September, while undergoing torture (*estando puesto en el tormento*), Benito García testified about several details which concerned the crucifixion of the child.¹⁰⁴ His description of the location of the cave and the child’s grave differed from that given by Yuce Franco, and he offered some “fresh” information on the nature of the child’s ordeal. On the 20th of October he added some minor details.¹⁰⁵ From the 28th to the 30th of September, Juan Franco and Juan de Ocaña submitted similar confessions.¹⁰⁶ From the remarks made by his associates, Yuce Franco now emerged as one of the chief instigators of the abominable deed. On the 26th of September, Yuce Franco himself testified that, while in prison, he had discussed with Benito García various plans for shifting the blame to the others in the eventuality that they should be forced to confess under torture.¹⁰⁷ On each new occasion Yuce felt compelled to contribute some fresh unimportant detail, the next effect of which was to

appease his tormentors without adding anything substantial to the case.

The 11th of October marked the return to the interrogation of Fernando de Santo Domingo, no reference to whom had been made in the previous months.¹⁰⁸ The trial was drawing to a close. The interrogators now resorted to a tactic that had never before been used by Torquemada's Inquisition. On the 12th of October, Doctor Pedro de Villada and Fernando de Santo Domingo visited the prison, had Yuce Franco and Benito García brought before them, and ordered each to iterate in the other's presence the confession he had made in regard to the host and the crucifixion of the child.¹⁰⁹ No sooner was this accomplished, than Juan de Ocaña was ushered in, and the three men were then made to repeat the entire performance. The protocol concludes: "And they conversed together and were glad to have met again, for they said that it was over a year since they had last seen each other"—a statement which is proved false by the earlier protocols themselves, where it is attested that the prisoners met and spoke to each other during the period of their confinement. On the 17th of October, the inquisitors arranged a similar confrontation between Yuce and Don Ça Franco on the one hand, and Juan Franco on the other. According to the notary, the prisoners again rejoiced in their reunion and their testimony was mutually corroborative. This bit of information does not even stand the test of the most elementary criticism. During the last few weeks of the trial, for example, Yuce Franco and Benito García made every effort to fix on each other the main burden of guilt; how, then, could their formal statements have possibly agreed? In these instances the redactor of the protocols omits so much material that virtually no mention is made of what the prisoners themselves actually said. In fact, the entire procedure of having the guilty accomplices confront each other face to face was nothing but a sham.

One can easily imagine who were the readers for whom these protocols were being prepared. The inquisitors in Ávila had by now come to the decision to consult the opinion of outside experts. Fernando de Santo Domingo himself travelled for this purpose to Salamanca, to organize a typical *Consulta-de-fé*, and convoked an assembly of monastic scholars in the cloister of St. Stephen; among those assembled were two professors of Hebrew and Holy Writ, and six doctors and professors of canon law from the University of Salamanca. One of these scholars, the monk Antonio de la Peña, is already familiar to us: ¹¹⁰ it was he who assisted Fernando de Santo Domingo to compose his antisemitic works in the monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia.¹¹¹ The scholars swore before Fernando to preserve the secrecy of whatever was due to come up for discussion. On the 28th of October they met again and unanimously pronounced that the accused, Yuce Franco, had been found guilty and should now be turned over to the secular authorities. No information is available on what actually took place or what the reasons given for the decision were. The dealings occurred post-haste. On October 31st, Fernando was back in Ávila to resume there the role of head of the tribunal.

In his absence, meanwhile, the court in Ávila continued its formal procedures. Naturally, in the course of this process—"the publication of testimony" (*publicatio testium*) and the refutations of the accused (which were, of course, compiled with the assistance, well-meaning or otherwise, of the counsel for the defense)—nothing original transpired. In his plea of the 29th of October,¹¹² Yuce Franco argued that the evidence against him deserved to be disavowed on the grounds that the witnesses who gave it were personal enemies and accomplices in crime; seeing that it was through Yuce that the severity of their misdeed was disclosed, and having come to a realization that doom was inevitable, they had sought to involve him too. Benito García in particular, Yuce added, was

heard to have publicly said on several occasions that his own fate and that of the others depended for good or for bad on Yuce's testimony. It was inconceivable, Yuce claimed, that he, a young Jew totally unaffected by the Inquisition, should have implicated himself in either sorcery or child-crucifixion, except insofar as he was present at the time and a limited participant, as he had already confessed, etc., etc.

On the 2nd of November, 1491, the inquisitors visited the prison, a fifteen-point questionnaire in their possession.¹¹³ When Yuce failed to answer all the questions adequately, he was brought to the torture chamber and placed on the rack; thereupon, either on the basis of prior instructions or else according to the dictates of his own imagination, he gave a fully detailed response that was calculated to appease his judges-tormentors. It will suffice here to give a few examples of the "fresh facts" revealed in the torture chamber. The crucified child, Yuce now said, had been found by Juan Franco in the streets of Toledo and brought to the place of the crime. This he had heard from Juan Franco himself while the crucifixion was being performed; the name of the child's mother, however, and the street from which it was snatched, were not known to him. Fearing the power of the Inquisition, the Franco brothers then solicited Maestre Yuça Tazarte to execute a spell by means of the host; when this, though, proved to be of no avail, and Alonso Franco was forced to undergo embarrassing penitence at the hands of the Inquisition, they sought to take stronger measures, such as conjuring with the child's heart. Under torture, Yuce also made new disclosures on the subject of the invective hurled at the child; his statements in regard to this indicate extreme confusion and are based partly on versions of the *Sefer Toledoth Yeshu* and partly on a later Christian tradition¹¹⁴—a synthesis which only a clearly "antisemitic" writer could arrive at. Similar confessions were made by Yuce Franco on November 4th and 5th, 1491. Among other things, he claimed to

have heard Maestre Yuça Tazarte say that the crime committed by the group demanded the participation of five Jews and five Christians, an assertion which he based on the verse: "He hath founded his band in the earth" (Amos 9.6, according to the interpretation in Mishnah Aboth 3, 6).¹¹⁵ In reality, of course, even the simplest Jewish shoemaker would have recognized that such a *minyan* is sheer fabrication, the product of some antisemitic writer's distorted interpretation of the passage in Aboth 3,6.

Meanwhile, on the 2nd and 3rd of November, the remaining prisoners were interrogated once more. Chief among these was old Ça Franco, who, despite the fact that he was given the water torture,¹¹⁶ yielded nothing more than a negligible detail in connection with the curses which were supposedly uttered in the course of the crucifixion. On November 14, 1491, the inquisitors reassembled Isaac and Yuce Franco, Benito García, and Juan de Ocaña and Juan Franco, in the hope of further corroborating the joint evidence. It was now revealed that the two *conversos*, Benito García and Juan Franco, had gone to Toledo together to look for a Christian child. The child was discovered by Juan Franco, who kidnapped him from the *puerta del perdón*, the famous portal of the cathedral in Toledo (a site apt to be congested at any hour of the day).¹¹⁷

Prior to this, on November 11th, the inquisitors had once again consulted the opinion of experts (*letrados*), all of whom were important lay and ecclesiastical citizens of Ávila. At their head was the royal mayor (*corregidor*). The verdict of this *Consulta-de-fé* was that the Inquisition possessed the power to sentence Ça and Yuce Franco and to hand them over to the "secular arm."¹¹⁸

On November 14, 1491, the *auto-de-fé* took place in Ávila, and the accused were executed according to custom. The sentence of Yuce Franco, which was read aloud shortly before he was led to the stake, contributes nothing new to our

knowledge.¹¹⁹ The sentence of Benito García, too, which has been preserved in other sources,¹²⁰ merely confirms and rounds out what we know from the records of Yuce Franco.

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRIAL

A detailed analysis of the records of the trial of the “holy child” cannot leave even the shadow of a doubt as to the true nature of the proceedings. The charges of sorcery and child-crucifixion were the inventions of antisemitic propaganda. The basis for the accusation had been laid long before the trial.¹²¹ The attempt to construct a reasonable composite picture of the various testimonies was a complete failure. On the contrary: practically every word touching on the matter of the crimes is demonstrably false. Not only do no two sets of testimony confirm each other, but there is not even a single witness whose testimony is internally consistent. The statements of the accused disagree on the time and the place of the rendezvous, the parts played in committing the crime by the various defendants, the actual carrying out of the crimes themselves, the origins of the child, and the location of his grave. At no point did the inquisitors seriously attempt to explain these contradictions or to subject them to a critical perusal of the facts. The host or hosts with which the magic was performed were never inquired after in court. The judges did not bother to contact the places from which the child was reported by the accused to have been kidnapped, nor did they profess interest in finding out whether a child ever disappeared in the first place. They issued no instructions to search for the site of the child’s grave or to exhume his bones. Throughout the entire trial, mention is never made of the “holy child’s” grave, though its fame began to spread shortly after the proceedings were over. The one conclusion to be drawn from the protocols is that the murdered child simply never existed. The inquisitors did not assay to determine who engineered the plot, nor did they permit a single

responsible member of the Jewish community to intercede and explain what the general Jewish position on the purported crimes would be. The defense counsel appointed by inquisitorial law was content to issue a formal, but worthless, denial of the charges, and, as was customary, resigned his post as soon as it became clear that the judges were convinced of his clients' guilt, inasmuch as it would have constituted a mortal sin knowingly to safeguard crime and heresy. The formal principle of considering an accusation proved on the basis of testimony submitted by the accused was employed far more freely than in many other such trials. Generally speaking, many of the criticisms which one makes of the trial from a modern point of view would have appeared equally valid when considered according to the standards of those times. Even the few formal arguments which the defense did advance were summarily dismissed by the judges. They paid no attention to the fact that the "witnesses" were all co-defendants and so inclined to mutual hostility, since each was prepared to save himself at the expense of the others.

Moreover, in removing the trial from the jurisdiction of the Inquisition in Toledo and creating a specially appointed court of "expert" judges, Torquemada acted in a manner that was hitherto without precedent. In view of both the general outlook which prevailed in the Middle Ages and the mental bent of the particular period under discussion, it is, of course, possible to justify the Inquisition by pointing to the extraordinary measures which the unusual discovery of a wholesale conspiracy against the Catholic Church forced it to adopt; faced with the task of unveiling the felons, it could little afford to take previous juridical practices into account. This contention, however, is only calculated to further reveal the irrational, popular and antisemitic background of the Inquisition in Castile. Torquemada and his aides were not simply ecclesiastical magistrates acting according to fixed and rational rules; they were politicians deliberately intent on car-

rying out a relentless pursuit of their goal —the complete extermination of Spanish Jewry. They were moved to compassion or to severity purely on the basis of tactical considerations, and they extended their power over all of Castile and Aragon until they succeeded in accomplishing their aim.

It is not overly difficult to ascertain the historical role played by the trial in the development of the political antisemitism of this period. For the most part, the trials held under the auspices of the Inquisition were mainly concerned with the uncovering of judaizing tendencies among the *conversos* and with the influence wielded on the latter by the Jewish community itself. The crude and typically medieval antisemitism which had in a large measure impelled those who planned the destruction of Spanish Jewry to establish the new Inquisition, had heretofore insinuated itself only furtively into the court proceedings; now, however, it motivated an entire trial. When the records of the trial were first published, some modern scholars suggested that the inquisitor general had staged it so as to prepare the public for the wholesale expulsion of the Jews from Spain, which was decreed three months after the trial's end. No clear proofs exist to bear out this assumption. There is no mention of the La Guardia trial in the Edict of Expulsion. But only the very naive, or those who pretend to be such, can ignore the historical links between the La Guardia trial and the Expulsion.

THE EXPULSION

THE INQUISITION AND THE EXPULSION

In essence, the Inquisition was correct in its reading of the *conversos*' attitudes. In the twelve years of its existence, the Inquisition discovered about 13,000 forced converts, men and women, who were attached to their ancestral faith and people. Most of them practiced the Jewish religion in secret, and some did so openly. It is likely that many of the *conversos* were not cited before the Expulsion. Their number, including minors, must have run into tens of thousands. The Jewish community gave them all possible aid and encouragement. *Conversos* and Jews were one people, united by bonds of religion, destiny and messianic hope, which in Spain took on

unique coloration typical of the people and the country. Herein lies for us the chief value of the Inquisition records. The confessions and testimonies contained in these records breathe a nostalgic yearning for the national homeland, both earthly and heavenly—a yearning for all things, great and small, sanctified by the national tradition, and for something even greater, which had created the people and maintained it in life. For 1500 years the struggle had gone on between Christianity and the Jewish people, which was fighting for its political and spiritual existence. Now, for a brief span of time—twelve years—this conflict flared up anew, throwing into turmoil the life of the simple burgher, and giving rise to hatred and jealousy, treason and slander, envy and meanness, courage and exaltation, and resulting in victims and sacrificial pyres.

Once and for all, the Church Militant arose to administer the death blow to its adversary. On one side stood the Catholic Church, firmly entrenched in the solid ground of its organization and religious dogmas, and supported by the “Secular Arm” and mob prejudice. Originally conceived as a purely religious institution, the Church was now in fact nourished by the sinister forces of rampant antisemitism and foul suspicion. Meanwhile, contemporary humanism and enlightened diplomacy either submissively held their peace or actively fostered the evil. In opposition stood the small and persecuted Jewish people, too weak politically to defend itself, but defiantly triumphant in its power of endurance and purity of faith.¹ Jews and Christians alike believed in the power of the “*Sitra achara*” the devil. Yet at no time during this epoch of unbridled diabolism did the Jews identify their temporal enemies with the figure of Satan, as was done in Christian dogmatics to the foes of the Church, nor, naturally, were they in a position to employ the weapon of Satan. The purity of their ancestral faith remained fresh in their hearts. It was possible to vindicate the Torah, its commandments, and the

national misfortune by means of either a literal reading of Scripture and fact, philosophical homily, or the esoteric interpretations of the mystic. Essentially, however, scholar and intellectual, artisan and unlearned *converso*, who did not know a single Hebrew letter, all drew sustenance from the same eternal faith, whose radiance illuminated their path of suffering and torment, reviving and restoring their messianic dream in its pristine simplicity—a dream which is usually the dream of a youthful people, working on its native soil, and rising up to repel a foreign foe.

An abundance of Hebrew books testifies to the spiritual transformation which took place among those scholars active in the brief but revolutionary period between 1481 and 1492. Alongside such cultured, intellectually inclined preachers as R. Isaac 'Arama, Don Isaac Abravanel and R. Shemtob ibn Shemtob, we find talmudists and cabalists such as R. Isaac de Leon, R. Isaac Abohab, R. Abraham Saba, and R. Abraham b. Solomon Arduziel, as well as several younger scholars, born on Spanish soil during these very years.² It was the members of this latter group who, in the course of their wanderings in exile through Palestine and the Orient, were to transmit the milieu of their childhood and the doctrines of their earliest teachers and so lay the foundations for a new era in Jewish history.

Gershom Scholem has recently published the collection of cabalistic responsa which were exchanged between two mystical scholars some ten years before the Expulsion.³ The initiator of the correspondence was R. Judah b. Jacob Hayyat who, with his family, left Spain for Portugal in 1492, was driven from Lisbon in 1493, and passed through Málaga, Fez, Naples and Venice before stopping at Mantua. There, at the request of R. Joseph Ya'abetz, author of the *Or ha-Hayyim*, a close friend and fellow sufferer in exile, he wrote his commentary on the book *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut* (The Divine Order). The respondent was R. Joseph Alcastiel, at the time

(1482) a resident of Jativa, one of the few Jewish centers then still remaining in Valencia. According to Scholem, Alcastiel's replies form the basis for a mystical and eschatological theosophy which modern scholarship has hitherto enumerated as one of the great contributions of the later mysticism of Palestine and the Orient. Fragments of these replies were included by R. Meir b. Gabbai (b. in Spain, 1480) in his book *Tola'ath Ya'akov* (The Worm of Jacob) and in his final work, *'Avodath ha-Kodesh* (The Service of the Sanctuary), written in 1530–31 as a kind of polemical compendium aimed at the semi-rationalist philosophies of religion which were in vogue among Spanish Jews right up to the time of the Expulsion. Inasmuch as this latter book contains no reference to subsequent persons or events, it is safe to assume that it is entirely representative of the mystical trend of thought that won its victory in the tempest-tossed generation of the Expulsion.

The book itself, remarkable for its structural and stylistic clarity and straightforwardness of exposition, bears eloquent witness to the deeply human aspirations and exalted eschatological yearnings which, a heritage from Israel's first prophets and sages, lit the way in this latter-day era of terror and darkness; treated of in its pages are the questions of unity and continuity of Jewish history, faith and religion, and the general problem of Israel's historic place among the nations. The message of the mystical school, that influenced R. Meir b. Gabbai, to the victims of the Inquisition was that all that takes place upon the stage of world history is but a shadowy reflection produced by the powers above, who are continually intervening in mundane affairs. History, therefore, has but one true purpose: to restore to Humanity the original shape and form given to it simultaneously with the Creation, that is, "to create a creature perfect and complete, made in the image [of God] and after the pattern of the sacred and most high Tabernacle, which is none other than the

hidden emanation which is called the most high Man . . . of whom it was said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' ('*Avodath ha-Kodesh*, part I, ch. 17); "and the Lord made man after the likeness of the most high Glory, to that end that the Glory might be restored, fulfilling it with his good deeds" (*ibid.*, ch. 20); and the perfected one who expends all his days therein, he it is who lives the true life" (*ibid.*, ch. 17).

It goes without saying that, for such a creed, Israel is the center of the process of redemption, but ultimately it is to the redemption of all mankind that the believer looks. The sole purpose of all the prophets (*ibid.*, part 11, ch. 38) was

to restore to the world its original nature and properties, such as belonged to it in the beginning of Creation, in the time before the first sin. For with the sin of the first man Nature was transmuted, but with the coming of the King Messiah it will revert to its archetype, for then the Divine plan will have arrived at its completion. Indeed, heretofore the plan of the Rider of the Serpent, the deceiver of the first man and the begetter of sin, has progressed and prevailed; but with the coming of the Time of Love, the Holy One Blessed Be He will banish him from the world, and the plan of His Creation will then be completed. And this is the meaning of the members of the Great Synagogue, may they rest in peace, in their prayer for the New Year, where they say: "And therefore do we look to Thee, O Lord our God, that we may speedily witness Thy glorious strength, etc.; for therein they meant to indicate that Almighty God and His All-powerful Presence will be seen by us face to face and will be revealed throughout the world, whereas heretofore they have remained hidden, nor has the Unity been revealed, on account of the imperfection of the nether worlds. And the effect of the Revealing and being Seen will be to banish the idols [*gilulim*], which are the product of the principle of impurity, from the celes-

tial world. . . . Then will the false terrestrial gods be hewed down; for when impurity is banished above, all idolatry will disappear here below . . . This, then, is the reason for regenerating the world according to the Kingdom of God, for until now it has not been regenerated, nor has His purpose in this world been fulfilled . . . then will His Kingdom be regenerated . . . and the world revert to what it was before the sin of the first man. Then all flesh will call in Thy Name, as they have not hitherto done because of the impurity, and we shall witness the accomplishment of the verse, “Yea, at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve Him with one accord” (Zeph. 3.9). Then the wicked of the earth shall be turned to Thee: In very truth they shall turn to His Unity and submit to the yoke of His Kingdom, for that which has hitherto impeded their approach, being the principle of impurity, will be no more; and when the Holy One Blessed Be He shall have consumed it utterly from the world, every denizen of the universe will know that “to Thee alone doth every knee bend, etc.; greatly shall they honor Thy glorious Name, what glory they have hitherto attributed only to the other principle [of impurity], and receive the yoke not of any other, but of Thy Kingdom alone.”

And in a similar vein, on the remark in Tosephta Sanhedrin 13, 2, that “the righteous among the Gentiles have a share in the world-to-come,” Alcastiel (II, ch. 42) comments:

The righteous among the Gentiles are they who observe the seven commandments given to the sons of Noah, and for observing them well they attain the rung they do, no less than do the perfectly righteous who observe all the commandments of Moses; each is judged according to the law given to him; and inasmuch as each observes what he has been commanded, each attains the corresponding rung in the world-to-come.

Noticeably absent in the works of such scholars as R. Joseph Alcastiel and his disciple, R. Meir Gabbai, are the messianic calculations, Armageddons, and other standard machinery of apocalyptic lore. Here, all is composed of inner vision and a firm faith in the coming of God's Kingdom and the inevitable redemption of each righteous soul, whether Jew or Gentile. Once again the messianic ideas rest upon their ancient, original foundations: the belief in the prophecies of an end of days and in the final denouement of all human history. By virtue of such a faith the Jew first evolved the practice of martyrdom, the medieval revival of which, though it began with the pious men of Ashkenaz, eventually claimed the heartfelt allegiance of Spanish Jewry—the tortured of the Inquisition and the generation of the expulsion.

In the writings of R. Abraham b. Eliezer Halevi, who, after studying with Rabbi Isaac Chacon of Toledo, settled in Jerusalem where he became a fervent messianist, we find the following old tradition:

Whoever firmly resolves to devote himself to the honor of His Name, come what may and befall him what may, the blows he receives shall cause him no pain . . . And if such a man, being exposed to cruel tortures and sorely tormented, as was the case with the holy martyrs in the Land, those marvellous young men, the sons of saintly Hannah, in the days when the priests could come near the Presence of God; they were the heroes who fought God's battles—if such a man will but concentrate and put between his eyes the “awe-inspiring and great Name,” * resolve to undergo martyrdom, and his eyes will incline towards the Holy One of Israel . . . then he may be sure that he will withstand the test . . . nor feel any pain, blows or torments . . . And these

*For such use of Names of God referred to in cabalistic writings, see Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* [Jerusalem, 1941], p. 143.

things are worthy to be made known to His people Israel, for the generation is one of religious persecution, and no Israelite should go in ignorance of this principle. . . . And it may well be that it was to such a saintly person, who, albeit his soul is given over completely to God and rejoices in His love, is yet buried together with the wicked and consumed by fire, the wise Solomon alluded when he said (Song of Songs 8.5), “Who is that coming up from the wilderness, leaning (Hebrew, *mitra-peketh*) upon her beloved?” For the promise of the Lord proves true: she [the soul] leans and falls, limb by limb and piece by piece; but of such a saintly soul the righteous who dwell in the innermost mansion of the King, where joy resides, expound: Who is that coming up from the terrestrial world, which is like unto a wilderness? . . . Out of love for her beloved her body falls part by part (Hebrew, *perakim perakim*); because of the trials she undergoes, her flesh pierced by tongs or cut to pieces by the sword; and the King, to Whom all peace belongs, for Whose love she suffers so, looks down from His abode and proclaims as she ascends to Him. “Behold thou are upright and pure, today have I begotten thee” (Ps. 2.7), and “Under the apple tree I awakened thee” (Song of Songs 8.5).

This sublime homily, of which we have quoted but fragments, is to be fully understood only by those well-versed in the esotericism of the Cabala. For the most part, however, such homilies, which were common in the years preceding the Expulsion, were intended for the edification and instruction of the average man as well as the scholar. Indeed, their roots can be traced back to the traditions of the Jewish martyrs in the time of the pagan Roman Empire.⁴

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA

The general expulsion of the Jews from Spain was postponed from year to year, for reasons of both domestic and

foreign policy. It was the politics of the Reconquista which had originally established the peculiar status of the Jews in the Christian states of the Iberian Peninsula. With the consummation of the great scheme of unifying all Spain under Christian rule, the political foundation of the Spanish Jewish community was undermined. In a stubborn war which, with intermissions, raged from 1481 to early in 1492, the Spaniards conquered the last remnants of the Moslem State on their soil. The Jews of the conquered Moslem cities met with a fate entirely different from that of their ancestors in the early stages of the Reconquista. Approximately all the 400 Jews living in Málaga were treated like prisoners of war when it was taken by the Christians in 1487, and their ransom had to be raised by all the Jewish communities of Spain. Indeed, the capitulation treaties with the Moslems of Almería (December, 1489) and of Granada (by the end of 1491) were modelled on the treaties of surrender of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and their favorable provisions applied to the Jews as well, except for the concession (also borrowed from the twelfth-century treaties) that Jewish officers should not be placed in authority over Moslems. However, these treaties were of no practical value. The Judaized Christians, that is, the forced converts who had fled from Spain to Granada and there reverted to Judaism, were ordered by their conquerors to make up their minds within a short specified time to choose one of two alternatives: either to live completely Christian lives or to leave the country. A proposal for the immediate expulsion of the Jews from the whole conquered area was entertained, but not adopted. It occurred to no one that the Jews could be used as a friendly colonizing force, as in earlier periods. With the entry of the Catholic Monarchs into the city of Granada on January 2, 1492, the fate of Spanish Jewry was sealed in the conquered territory as well as throughout the realms of Aragon and Castile.⁵

THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM SPAIN

As late as 1491, the government of Castile renewed its contracts as usual with the Jewish tax-farmers for four years. Similar new contracts were signed early in 1492. This does not mean that Expulsion was not already being considered as a practical proposition at the time. Most of the tax-farming had been entrusted to R. Meir Melamed and his aged father-in-law, Don Abraham Seneor. Other leading Jewish tax-farmers were Isaac Abravanel and his kinsman Joseph. The last acts of the Catholic Monarchs in this respect give a clue to their original intention to convert these excellent men and so retain them in the service of the State even after the Expulsion. In December 1491, the sovereigns enacted new laws for the reform of the system of tax-farming, reserving to themselves full rights of supervision and also the right to cancel contracts inconsistent with the reorganization plans of the State. The way had already been paved for ejecting the Jews from the body politic without upsetting internal administrative arrangements.⁶

On March 31, 1492, in the city of Granada, the king and queen signed the Edict for the expulsion of the Jews from all territories under the crowns of Castile and Aragon. The reason given in the Edict for the expulsion was to prevent the Jews from inflicting further injury upon the Christian religion. In the text of the Edict, the legislators enumerated the steps taken during the previous twelve years to prevent the Jews from influencing the *conversos* and to purify the Christian faith: segregation of the Jews in separate quarters; establishment of the Inquisition; and expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia. All these measures having failed, there was no choice but to take the drastic step of expelling all the Jews once and for all from the aforementioned territories of the crown. The content and style of the Edict mark it as having been drafted in the phraseology of the inquisitors and in the

form of their court records, so that there can be no doubt that it emanated from the workshop of the Inquisition. The Jews were commanded to leave the country “by order of the King and Queen, our sovereigns, and of the Reverend Prior of Santa Cruz, inquisitor general in all the kingdoms and dominions of Their Majesties.”⁷

Though signed on March 31, the Edict was promulgated only between April 29 and May 1. A modern scholar has attempted to explain the delay by suggesting that the government kept the matter secret so as to take the financiers by surprise before they could smuggle their capital out of the country. It is more likely, however, that the signing of the Edict became known immediately to individuals both near to and far from the royal court, but that the Jews began to take measures for its repeal, as we know from R. Isaac Abravanel and R. Eliahu Capsali; its publication was therefore postponed. It was said that not only Abravanel himself, but also men like Don Abraham Seneor and even Alfonso de la Cavalleria took part in the representations.⁸

The Expulsion began in May. On the whole, the authorities intended to carry out the evacuation of the Jews in a quiet and orderly manner. The State took the Jewish quarters under its protection. From government headquarters instructions were issued to all the localities to pay the Jews all that was owed to them, and to enable them to pay their own debts and to dispose of their possessions on fair and equitable terms. Nevertheless, there were numerous instances of extortion and chicanery. The Jews had to sell their property for a song: “a donkey or a vineyard for a piece of woolen or cotton cloth.” The wealthy Jews could not wind up their affairs in time, and had to entrust them to their Christian agents. The Jews were forbidden to take away gold, silver or precious stones. Synagogues, cemeteries and the property of aljamas and public institutions were confiscated and taken over by the royal treasury. Some of the synagogues were con-

verted into churches. When certain Christian municipalities promised Jewish communities, for a consideration, to protect their ancestral graves from profanation, such agreements were nullified by the authorities. The aljamas were obliged to pay their regular taxes for a year or for several years in advance, so that the royal treasury would incur no deficit.⁹

Most of these transactions were supervised entirely by secular and civil officials. It was only in Saragossa and other cities in Aragon that the inquisitors also took a hand in overseeing the sale of Jewish property, as they had done when the Jews were expelled from Andalusia. This they did on the strength of a new regulation of their own making, namely, that Jewish property fell into the same category as the property of heretics or of persons associating with heretics. Every Jew was ordered to appraise his property and to report its value to the commissioners of the Inquisition. Anyone who cheated would be liable to the punishment meted out to a heretic who had been pardoned his recalcitrancy and then relapsed. This peculiar intervention may, perhaps, be interpreted as a fitting end to all the torments inflicted by the Inquisition upon the province of Aragon and its unfortunate population in the previous years.¹⁰

We have here a curious blend of racial and religious motives. Ostensibly, the whole purpose of the Expulsion was to excise from the body politic a foreign racial element which the Spanish Christians were unable to assimilate. In fact, however, this Expulsion, like others in the Middle Ages, was a means of religious coercion. The Catholic Monarchs did not employ cruel and shocking measures to force Christianity upon the Jews, as was done in Portugal a few years later; but they helped to facilitate conversion. Simultaneously with the Edict of Expulsion, they enacted certain laws for the benefit of converts, promising such persons aid and protection and exempting them for a time from the control of the Inquisition so as to allow them leisure to accustom themselves to their new faith.

The Expulsion Edict had no sooner been published than the clergy launched a widespread campaign for the conversion of the Jews. On that very day, for example, R. Yosé the rabbi of Teruel, was detained in his home so that the Franciscan monks would not be hindered in their proselytizing activities. The records of the municipal council show that nearly 100 persons—men, women and children—were baptized in the course of a single morning. The municipal councillors themselves went from door to door trying to persuade the Jews to be baptized so that they might remain in Teruel, as otherwise the city would be ruined altogether. Just then R. Solomon, the aged rabbi of Albarracin, who had been banished from his own city because of his sermons, appeared in Teruel. He continued to preach in Teruel in the same vein until he was expelled from there as well. In the meantime, however, his sermons had borne fruit. There were no more conversions, and the Jews began to prepare for their departure.¹¹ All available municipal records contain lists of the names of Jews who were converted during these months, and the Jewish religious leaders made no attempt to conceal the fact that apostasy was on the increase again, especially amid the wealthy and educated among whom secular culture had wrought much havoc. The aged Don Abraham Seneor (Fernando Núñez Coronel), the last Jewish court-appointed rabbi of Castile, and his son-in-law, R. Meir Melamed (Fernando Pérez Coronel), were baptized with great ceremony on June 15, 1492. Some time later a story was circulated among the Jews to the effect that

the queen had sworn that if Don Abraham Seneor were not baptized, she would destroy all the Jewish communities; he did what he did to save the lives of many people, and not of his own desire. His son-in-law also followed his example, for both of them fell victim to the queen's design, they having reared her and made her great . . . therefore she was resolved, cost what it might, to bring them into the Christian fold by any and all

means whatsoever, so that they would continue to serve her to her dying day.

It may well be that they were both enticed and threatened into compliance. Similar attempts were apparently made to convert Don Isaac Abravanel and his family, as is implied in the following lines from a poem by his famous son, Judah Abravanel:

At that same time that exiles fled from Spain,
The king set up an ambush and bespake
That I be barred from safely passing through,
So that he might my youngest suckling take
And make of him a convert to his faith.

The boy was taken secretly to Portugal, where several other members of the family had already taken refuge. Others, with the permission of the authorities, left Spain from Mediterranean ports. Isaac and Joseph Abravanel renounced their claim to certain sums of money which they had advanced to the sovereigns against the revenue from the farmed taxes, the equivalent of which they had not yet been able to collect. It was for this reason that on May 31, 1492, they were granted a special permit to take one thousand gold ducats, and various gold and silver ornaments, out of the country. Early in July they sailed from the port of Valencia.¹²

The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain was a political phenomenon without counterpart in the Middle Ages. When, as also happened about that time, the Jews were banished from Germany, or from France in the preceding centuries, the expulsions were either partial or were not carried out in a single operation, so that the Jewish population of both countries were accustomed to a migratory existence. The only parallel to the Spanish Expulsion is the Expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, which also involved an entire territory. The English Jews were not, however, the equals of the Spanish Jews either numerically or in overall quality.

Besides, times and ethical concepts had changed. The expulsion of an entire community from an entire kingdom was an event no less new and terrible in those days than in ours.* As in modern times, the Expulsion could be implemented only if the countries across the frontiers would consent to admit the exiles. The French frontier, on the north, was almost entirely closed to Jews—except to *conversos* seeking admission as Christians. According to Jewish and Christian sources, the majority of the exiles, numbering between 100,000 and 120,000, emigrated to Portugal. Most of them were, however, permitted to remain in that country for only a limited period. Thereafter the illegal immigrants fell into the clutches of Portuguese government officials, who devised all kinds of cruelties to force them either to leave the country or to embrace Christianity. The remaining exiles, who probably numbered no more than about 50,000, sailed from the southern ports (Almería) for North Africa or from the eastern ports (Valencia and Barcelona) for Italy and the East. Turkey was the only great power to receive the exiles with open arms and with no particular restrictions or reservations, as befitted a barbaric conqueror set on improving economic conditions in his new dominions and not especially concerned with theological fine points. The Hebrew literature of the time contains accounts of the sufferings of poor exiles who could not afford to pay passage money to shipowners, or who were turned away from shores where they had hoped to find a refuge. Those who lacked the means, the assistance, and the courage to embark on journeys and seek shelter in strange lands had the choice of becoming Christians and remaining in Spain, or of going back if they had already left. Those who returned after long wanderings and great hardship were again exposed to the terrors of the Inquisition, as its own records indicate.¹³

* This sentence was first written in 1936. See Y. F. Baer, “Die Vertreibung der Juden aus Spanien,” in *Almanach des Schocken Verlags*, for the year 5697.

The Jews had to leave Spain within three months after the promulgation of the Edict of Expulsion. Under the protection of government officials, they left on foot, in carriages, or in boats for the frontiers or seaports. Bernáldez, the priest who has so much to say about the hopeless obduracy of the Jews, can hardly restrain his admiration for the manner of their exodus: with hymns on their lips, each man helping and encouraging his fellow, and firm in their naive belief that the sea would divide for them as it had divided for their forefathers when they departed from Egypt. On July 31, 1492 (the 7th of Ab) the last Jew left the soil of Spain. The few who weakened and happened to stay behind were soon rounded up by the secular and ecclesiastical police, and were either baptized under duress or forcibly expelled from the country. According to a legendary report—among the first to give it currency was R. Isaac Abravanel, one of the men who figured very prominently in the whole chapter of the Expulsion—all the Jews left Spain “on a single day, the 9th of Ab.” This is nothing but a fable invented in the bright light of history. On the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple all the Jews of Spain were either wandering outside its borders on land and sea, or were confined in the dungeons of the Inquisition and bound by the fetters of an alien faith which had been forced upon them.¹⁴

THE EXPULSION AS VIEWED BY CONTEMPORARIES

Few and casual are the references made by the Christian writers of that age to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Alfonso de Palencia, a typical “moderate” antisemite, left off work as a historian at the very time when the policy of unmitigated persecution went into effect. Not a few men of high culture and standing, like Palencia, must have felt that they had no choice but to hold their peace at the sight of the atrocities committed before their very eyes. Our one comprehensive account of the Inquisition and the Expulsion comes from the pen of the priest-historian Andrés Bernáldez, who

discussed these subjects fully and clearly and in the same spirit of hostility as moved the inquisitors themselves. The Inquisition (which did indeed later on develop into the rational and well-ordered institution its modern apologists make it out to have been) and the Expulsion soon became legal and historical fact and ecclesiastical final judgment which are not to be challenged. Such was the consensus of Christian opinion in all countries. True, the Italian humanists could not entirely suppress their commiseration at the sight of the wretched Jews who sought, and were denied, a temporary refuge in their cities. But at bottom, they found pride and solace in the victory of their Church, the exaltation of their faith and the divine judgment meted out to Jews through the "Most Christian King who is beyond all praise." These words were written in 1493 by Pico della Mirandola, the sensitive humanist who associated with Jewish scholars like Eliahu del Medigo and Judah Abravanel. In the famous polemical work in which Mirandola attacked astrology, he referred with much satisfaction to the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain as having disproved the astrological calculations of the Jewish scholars.

Even those Italian thinkers who had begun to free their minds from the yoke of the theological approach did not change their attitude towards the Jews. Guicciardini, the Florentine historian and statesman, characterized the Expulsion of the Jews as one of the most important achievements of the Catholic Monarchs, who united Spain and raised it to the rank of a great power. Guicciardini declared that in the reign of Henry IV, Castile was in a state of anarchy, the country being full of Jews and heretics. The highest state offices and the farming of taxes were entrusted to them, and their numbers and influence waxed to such an extent that, had the situation not been corrected, Spain would in a few years have forsaken the Catholic religion. Thus, Guicciardini lauds the activities of the Inquisition and refers with satis-

faction to the burning of 120 persons in a single day at Cordova.

From here it is only a short step to the philosophy of Machiavelli. For Machiavelli, as we know, religion was a mere means to be used towards some diplomatic end; of this basic tenet, the expulsion of the Jews (*marrani*) from Spain on the part of Ferdinand (who—rather than Isabella—is considered by Machiavelli to be the true founder of the greater Spanish State) serves as a good illustration. In order to confiscate the property of the Jews for his own political purposes, Machiavelli writes, Ferdinand had recourse to “a pious cruelty” (*una pietosa crudeltà*) and ordered the Expulsion: “no more admirable or more rare example could there be.” This ostensibly realistic assessment, which has proved popular even with modern historians, is actually at odds with the historical facts. To be sure, Ferdinand and Isabella did not omit to employ methods of *Realpolitik*, but they were nonetheless firm adherents of the Catholic Church and its medieval doctrines. Religion did not serve in their hands as a political tool; it was, rather, a dogmatic factor in its own right, which finally induced them to adopt the policies of the Inquisition and Expulsion.¹⁵

Among Jews, there was one single individual who, some thirty years after the event, ventured to discuss the real causes of the Expulsion from Spain in the light of Italian political thought. This was Solomon ibn Verga in his *Shebet Yehudah*. But ibn Verga’s thoughts on the subject, though highly suggestive, did not find their suitable expression, and he neither probed to the necessary depth nor arrived at any practical conclusions which might conceivably have pointed a way towards the improvement of the political status of his people. In the final analysis, he, too, failed to penetrate beyond the traditional religious framework common to all ages of Diaspora Jewry. As for his many contemporaries who had occasion to mention the Expulsion in their books, none for-

sook the narrow confines of that mythicizing mentality which has been at once the particular strength and weakness of the Jewish people since earliest antiquity. Though their accounts of the Expulsion, of the twelve years that preceded it and the difficult events that followed, are not without interest, their horizons are modest, and they make no serious effort to explore the real issues having to do, whether directly or in a more oblique manner, with the great crisis. Often there is even an avoidable carelessness with dates and other details of which they were eye-witnesses, and in some cases facts are consciously or unconsciously distorted so as to become amenable to religious or legendary exposition. An entire world lay in ruins before them and yet—except for the great religious resurgence which led to the temporary renewal of the Jewish community in Palestine—the foundations of the old modes of thought remained unshaken and new, real ways of national rebirth were not sought out.

With the exception of a few scattered sparks kindled in the hearts of certain *conversos* in the post-Expulsion period, the time had not yet come for a fundamental reappraisal of historical and political concepts. The literature of the age of the Expulsion is devoted entirely to expressions of repentance and messianic speculation; prognostications, though differing in style, are identical in content. Apocalyptic thinking was sharply on the increase, and it would seem to make little difference whether this thought was indebted to outside sources or was purely indigenous. A “semi-rationalist” such as Isaac Abravanel, for instance, a man intimate with outright secularists and traitors, hastened to assert that the generation of the Expulsion was blameless and that all of Spanish Jewry, upon hearing of the decree, fortified itself with faith: “for their King passeth on before them” (Mic. 2.13)—“the love and fear of God—they neither blasphemed God nor profaned His covenant.”

On the other hand, there were the pious, the moralists and

cabalists who felt called upon to censor and rebuke so as to ensure a complete repentance. Thus, in his *Or ha-Hayyim*, R. Joseph Ya'abetz writes:

And of those who prided themselves on their knowledge, almost all exchanged their glory on the bitter day; but the women and common folk gave up their bodies and possessions to sanctify their Creator.

The simple kept faith: "God preserveth the simple!" (Ps. 116.6). Thus was fulfilled the ancient prophecy which a thirteenth-century mystic had reapplied to the Jews of Spain: "And I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of the Lord" (Zeph. 3.12). The future was now in the hands of the courageous few who possessed the necessary strength to renounce the world and its pleasures and dedicate themselves to the inner rehabilitation of their people.

In Spain we see recapitulated, as it were, what took place—albeit against a wider historical backdrop—on two other occasions in the history of the Jews: once in the course of the drawn-out struggle with the united powers of Graeco-Roman civilization and early Christianity, and again in our own times, that began with the call to assimilate among the nations of Europe and whose continuation may be seen in all that has happened to the Jewish people ever since, down to our own generation. Whether they are aware of it or not, the different ages—whatever their external form or motivating ideology—have struggle for the preservation of the same value whose depth cannot be plumbed in terms of time and place. Here is one of the great mysteries of the historical process.

THE INQUISITION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Two Spanish scholars (Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz) ¹ have recently tried to prove that the ecclesiastical Spanish Inquisition of the Torquemada type was actually “the diabolical invention” of Spanish Jewry, as Sánchez Albornoz puts it: “*no cabe dudar de que la Inquisición fué una satánica invención hispano-hebraica.*” ²

Using the sources found in my first volume of documents, these two scholars have attempted to show that the inquisitorial procedure of the Catholic Church was actually based upon the methods then current in the courts of the Jewish communities in Spain. According to Castro, the peculiar na-

ture of the Inquisition—its corrupt processes, the atmosphere of mystery in which the examination took place, its system based on denunciation and gossip—were typical of the atmosphere current in the Jewish communities.³ Sánchez Albornoz follows in the path beaten by Castro. He writes that the Spanish national tradition rose up against this unenlightened atmosphere in which informers, denunciation and religious coercion were used in order to obtain incriminating evidence against suspects, and in which trials were conducted without legal safeguards for the defendant:

*Frente a esa sombría atmósfera de gustosas delaciones, de presiones religiosas para conseguir testimonios comprometedores y de procedimientos sin garantías, se alzaba con fuerza la tradición nacional española.*⁴

In support of this theory, Sánchez Albornoz quotes several sections from the Castilian codices (Fuero Real IV 20, Partidas III 17), which reflect the conflict between the “accusatorial” and the “inquisitorial” procedures (“*el sistema procesal acusatorio frente al inquisitivo*”). He further writes that the acceptance of Roman legal procedure opened the way for the inquisitorial method (“*La recepción del derecho romano iba abriendo paso a éste*”).⁵ But by this, Sánchez Albornoz himself indicates that the struggle reflected in the above-mentioned codices is one between German and Roman law—and not one of a national Spanish tradition versus such irregular methods as the acceptance of testimony of informers—*malsines*—as they are called by Sánchez Albornoz, supposedly customary in the stifling atmosphere of the Jewish ghetto.

As Sánchez Albornoz correctly points out, the above-mentioned Castilian laws give the king and his officers the right, under certain circumstances, to undertake a “*pesquisa*”—a Spanish word equivalent approximately to “inquisition”⁶—when the truth cannot be ascertained by other more regular means. But even then Castilian law guarantees the defend-

ant various legal safeguards. He has the right to demand that he be told the names of his accusers, and to receive a copy of the *pesquisa* (the inquisitorial document), etc. In private suits, the plaintiff is required to draw up his accusation (*acusación*) in writing, which document must include the names of the plaintiff, the judges, the time and place, etc. (Part VII, 1,14).

As Sánchez Albornoze notes, the ecclesiastical inquisitorial procedure of Torquemada was different. The defendant had no legal guarantees (*sistema procesal sin garantías*); it is therefore obvious that the Jewish procedure is imitated.⁷

The intention of the Castilian laws is correctly described by Sánchez Albornoze; but, as is well known, there is frequently a wide gulf between the aim of the lawmaker and the actual application of the legislation. Concerning Castile, we do not have the minutes of any legal proceeding of this particular period. However, in the chronicles and various other documents which we do have, we find many cases cited of the administration of justice (*facere justitiam*) by the king or another ruler, and of the punishment of malefactors either by death or mutilation, without the need being felt to explain or justify the verdict in any way. Moreover, the *pesquisa* was not such a rare legal procedure, as Sánchez Albornoze would like to believe on the basis of the language of the codes. For example: the abbot of the Monastery of Sahagun received the fines (*caloñas*) of the *pesquisas* held in the village of Sahagun, which was under the monastery's jurisdiction; in order to safeguard the villagers from capricious acts on the part of the monks, it was provided that the representatives of the villagers (its judges, *alcaldes*) conduct the *pesquisas*, and that the abbot receive a copy of the *pesquisa* only after its completion and official publication.⁸ From the point of view of the monastery, then, the *pesquisa* was of solely fiscal interest, whereas the villagers were first and foremost interested in the legal safeguarding of their freedom. During the thirteenth century, they succeeded in obtaining collective rights and guarantees against

capricious acts on the part of the monastery. But these guarantees are collective; there is no mention of safeguarding the rights of individuals during the *pesquisas*. The procedure itself seems to have meanwhile become quite common.

We need not here go into the differences between the *pesquisa* of primitive Spanish law, and the inquisition of Roman-canon law. What we have said suffices to make it clear that the postulated revolt of the “national-Spanish tradition” against the customs current in the Jewish ghetto is merely an antisemitic phraseology.

These are the conclusions to be drawn from the Castilian sources. As for Aragon—which Sánchez Albornoze did not consider—the matter is even more obvious. The Aragonian statutes and privileges use the word *inquisitio* in accordance with the language of the Roman-canon law. The *Privilegium Generale* of 1283 and the *fueros* of Aragon forbid the conducting of an *inquisitio* against any person for any cause. But actually, both the kings and their officials broke these laws from time to time—although they sometimes meted out penalties to others for breaking them.⁹ On the other hand, already in the days of James I several Jewish communities received privileges aimed at safeguarding them from inquisitorial procedures. For example, in 1274 the Jewish community of Perpignan received the privilege that before beginning the inquisitorial proceedings, the defendant was to be provided with a copy of the accusation and the name of the accuser; the latter was to be subject to the *poena talionis*, should he be unable to substantiate his accusation; the defendant was to be provided with an advocate (*advocatus*); torture (*tortura*, *quaestio*) was forbidden to be used on the accused.¹⁰

We thus see that the Jews themselves sought guarantees against the Roman-canon legal procedures which were as foreign to them as they were originally to the Christian peoples of Europe in earlier times.

From the point of view of the history of European law,

what is actually reflected here is the struggle between more naive procedures—one might say between the German system—and those of the Roman and the canon law.

This point has been dealt with frequently in modern works on the subject, and it embarrasses me to go into detail in reply to such a renowned historian as Cl. Sánchez Albornoz, the founder of the *Anuario de historia del derecho español*.¹¹ It is of course common knowledge that neither the terms *inquisitio*, *quaestio*, nor the institution as such originated in medieval times, either in the Christian Church or among the Jews; it stems from Roman law.¹²

It was through the influence of Roman law that in the Middle Ages—especially in southern Europe in the thirteenth century—the method of *inquisitio* (trial without a plaintiff and with the names of the witnesses kept secret) was introduced. This method became the accepted one in the Church inquisitorial tribunals, and was also introduced into the secular and royal courts, and finally traces of it began to appear even in the proceedings of the courts of the Jewish communities. In order to clarify this latter point, we will have to make a short survey of the development of criminal law among the Jews.

It is well known that the legal procedure in criminal cases current during the days of the autonomous Jewish State is to be found in the Mishnah, tractate Sanhedrin. The sole method of proof is attestation by witnesses, whose veracity is tested by cross-examination. The entire procedure is oral, but the defendant is kept completely informed both of the charge and of the witnesses' testimony. The early Halakhah knows nothing of an *advocatus*, but any individual member of the Sanhedrin, as well as any of the spectators before whom the trial is held, is invited to plead on behalf of the defendant. Concerning religious transgressions, the following law was further enacted: "the Beth-din may impose flagellation and punish even when not [warranted] by the Torah, yet

not with the intention of disregarding the Torah, but in order to make a fence round the Torah. It once happened, in the Greek period, that a man rode a horse on the Sabbath, and he was brought before the Court and stoned, not because he was liable thereto, but because it was required by the times . . .” (B.T. Sanh. 46a, Yeb. 90b). The procedural details in such cases are not known.

After political autonomy was lost and the Jews were subjected to the yoke of foreigners, they endeavored to maintain communal discipline—both religious and ethical—in accord with the exigencies of the times. The principles upon which they acted have been authoritatively summarized by Maimonides in his *Mishneh Torah*. According to Maimonides (Hilkhoh Sanhedrin 24, 4–10), the regulations of the above-mentioned Baraitha are valid in situations of emergency even after the loss of political autonomy; nor is the Beth-din (the Jewish court) in such circumstances bound to the strict observation of the Halakhah concerning the examination of witnesses. Further, the Beth-din is permitted—in order to maintain religious and moral discipline—to inflict exceptional punishment, such as mutilation, flogging, expropriation, excommunication (temporary expulsion from the community). As to the treatment of informers, Maimonides writes (Hilkhoh Hovel u-Masik 8, 10–11): “An informer may be killed anywhere, even at the present time, when we do not try cases involving capital punishment, and it is permissible to kill him before he has informed.” It is only required to observe strictly the halakhic order of warning the evildoer before he carries out his intention. Maimonides then adds: “There are frequently cases in the cities of the Maghrib of informers being killed or delivered into the hands of the Gentiles for punishment” (see vol. I, 232). It is true, these procedures are noteworthy and strange. They deserve more detailed research than is possible here.¹³ Certainly, they do not have any connection with the Roman inquisitorial procedure. These

regulations, as described by Maimonides, gave the Jewish communities wide power to uphold public morals with whatever authority they were able to acquire. But as a matter of fact, the ways and procedures of conducting a trial customary in the Jewish communities in Spain underwent a change; their development, it should be remembered, was under alien influence.

Only in investigating the conditions, as they were in Spain, can an exact research into the history of the law be carried out.

Of particular interest in this respect are several responsa written by Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret on matters concerning criminal law, among them two long halakhic letters which he wrote almost simultaneously although in a different manner, considering the different situations in Aragon and Castile.

The first responsa, which deals with the case of the informer in the days of Pedro III (vol. I, 168 f., 284 f.), excels in its strict and careful wording. The notorious slanderer had been pursuing his activities for quite some time, and had been duly warned by representatives of the Jewish communities involved in accordance with the precepts of talmudic law. When they at last began legal proceedings against him, incriminating testimony was taken from witnesses "in the courts of the whole land—from one end of the kingdom to the other." Some of the testimony was given in the presence of the defendant or that of his *advocatus*, and it was received in writing and sent to the courts involved. Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret tried to avoid giving a clear-cut judgment in this case (see vol. I, 231 ff). Nevertheless, he found it necessary to justify his actions afterwards. The technical term "inquisition" does not appear in connection with this trial, and the conduct of the heads of the communities was in any event unimpeachable.

Several of the Jewish communities in the Kingdom of

Aragon had at this time succeeded in obtaining privileges from the government concerning the judging of capital cases. When in a certain community, judges (*berurim*) were appointed “to extirpate sins,” and they obtained a royal license “to chastise, and to inflict both corporal and pecuniary punishment, as they see fit,” they asked the opinion of Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret concerning the correct procedure. Rabbi Solomon agreed with them and decided that the judges would be allowed to accept the testimony of witnesses who were unfit according to the Halakhah (i.e., women, minors, close relatives, the defendant himself), writing: “one who works for the reform of the social order of the community does not judge according to the laws written in the Torah, but according to the necessity arising from the needs of the times, as permitted by government license” (Responsa of Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret, IV, 311).

At about the same time as the trial of the informer in Aragon, Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret was asked by Rabbi Jacob ben Crisp of Toledo to render his opinion concerning the proper procedure to be used in connection with the great moral reform of the year 1281 (vol. I, 234, 260). Rabbi Jacob ben Crisp of Toledo had been granted by royal license the power to decide in concert with the elders of the community on corporal penalties (flagellation, the amputation of hand or foot, and death). In this instance also, Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret permitted the disregarding of the Halakhah in respect to the acceptance of testimony. But the cases under consideration were in the main of an overt nature and did not call for secret investigation. Generally, we may assume that Jewish judges in Toledo acted in the main according to the intention of Maimonides’ decision. Yet, the corporal penalties themselves reflect foreign influence. This point is particularly striking in respect to the severe corporal punishments meted out with the approval of Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel to various malefactors (vol. I, 322 ff.); it will suffice to refer the reader

to the laws of the “*Siete Partidas*,” especially Part. VII, tit. 31. Note especially the ordinance (Part. II, 13, 4; VII, 28, 4) which orders the cutting out of the tongue as the penalty for blasphemy, but forbids the cutting off of the nose or any other mutilation of the face, because man was “created in the image of God.” Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel apparently overlooked this important principle of Jewish law and was unduly influenced by the barbarism of his time.

The recently published responsa of Rabbi Yom-Tob ben Abraham Asbili (ed. by Rabbi Joseph Kapah, see vol. I, 429, n. 37), contains *inter alia* in no. 138 some shocking information concerning the case of an informer in the small town of Béjar, dating apparently from the end of Ferdinand IV’s reign (between 1310 and 1312). The accused, who was punished by the cutting off of his tongue and hand, appealed to the king, claiming that the judges did not act in accordance with the proper procedure, that they accepted the testimony of inadmissible witnesses, that they did not give equal hearing to both sides, and that they did not give the defendant a copy of the testimony nor the opportunity to appeal before the king’s court, etc. Rabbi Yom-Tob Asbili on his part replied in his responsum, which was likewise brought before the king, that the arguments made by the accused were in part unfounded, and that in any case a judge is not required to take such things into account in cases where he “must take care of the reform of the social order, extirpate wickedness from the land, and make a fence round the Torah,” because he [i.e., the judge] is the father of the community, and it is his duty to remedy this, just as it is his duty to see to the mending of roads which are in disrepair”; (cf. the definition of the function of the king in Part II, tit. 10–11). This method of defense was apparently accepted by the royal court—otherwise Rabbi Yom Tob would not have included it among his responsa, and it of course undoubtedly reflects contemporary views on the subject and not those of traditional Jewish law.

The only echo of specific criticism of illegal forms of “inquisition” in Castilian responsa is to be found in the works of Rabbi Judah ben Asher (in the thirties and forties of the fourteenth century) (*Zikhron Yehuda*, p. 55, part. 58). His reply reflects criminal law procedure current at his time. The witnesses testify, the defendant states his case, and endeavors to disqualify the witnesses, and their fitness then has to be determined. He goes on to write: “And one is not to pronounce the ban: anyone who knows anything reflecting upon the acceptability of one of the witnesses, whether he is suspected of any crime, let him come forth and testify—since such procedure would be a *pesquisa*, which it is forbidden to make against anyone, according to the laws of the land,” etc. This is the sole instance in which the foreign concept *pesquisa* is discussed in rabbinic responsa.

But some thirty to forty years later, Rabbi Isaac ben Shesheth treats of the concept *inquisitio* in a responsum dealing with an informer in Teruel (*supra*, p. 81). The rabbi clarifies the details of the legal procedure, which must be strictly followed, so that the king’s officers will not be able to call the judges of the Jewish community to account on the grounds that they did not act rightly “in view of the law forbidding the conducting of an *inquisitio* in Aragon.” Since the details of this case have already been brought out above, I need not go into them again here.

This case took place several years before the great persecution of the year 1391, and it is to this period (immediately before the holocaust) that most of the far-reaching privileges of the Jews of Aragon concerning capital cases, the maintenance of internal order, and defense against slanderers and informers, belong.¹⁴ *

Sources of this sort undoubtedly lay before us a dark pic-

* See above, ch. IX, *passim*, esp. pp. 64 ff: (“Criminal Jurisdiction and the Prosecution of Informers”) and pp. 73 ff. (“The Communal Leadership of R. Isaac b. Sheshet and Hasdai Crescas”).

ture of mutual hatred and suspicion. They call to mind similar class conflicts and family feuds that are known from the constitutional history of the cities of Spain and Italy. It is not our aim to gloss over the existing moral turpitude. In truth, a comparison of the legal procedure current in these communities with the pristine purity of that reflected in the Mishnah is most depressing.

But the main object of this short survey is to show to what an astounding degree the procedural methods used by the Jewish communities were influenced by those current at the time among the surrounding peoples, and this is true both with regard to their practical forms and their ideological basis, and especially with respect to the methods of *inquisitio*.

The Inquisition of the Roman Catholic Church (*inquisitio haereticae pravitatis*), so called because of the method of inquiry which it used, is based on Roman legal tradition. It arose and developed in connection with the campaign against heretics in southern France, and the forms of its procedure had already been clearly established by the first half of the thirteenth century. For instance, the Council of Béziers of 1246 ¹⁵ determined the procedural details for the inquisitorial court in forms which remained characteristic for the Inquisition of Torquemada: when the inquisitorial tribunal arrives at a particular city or town where it plans to hold court, the inquisitors first deliver a sermon before the assembled community, inviting the sinners to come before them and to confess their sins, a special time being set aside for this purpose (*edictum gratiae*). After this, the confessions of those who then came forward are received, and those who have not come of their own accord are summoned before the tribunal. The contents of the testimony, obtained either through the various confessions or by other means, is publicized, but the names of the informants are kept secret. The only resource left open for the defendant is to state that he suspects certain individuals to be his mortal enemies. It is, moreover,

explicitly provided that with respect to the crimes dealt with by the court of the Inquisition, the testimony of even notorious criminals and partners to the crime, etc., is admissible. It is obvious from these few points alone that the Inquisition of Torquemada was a direct descendant of the Dominican Inquisition of the thirteenth century.¹⁶ The papal decrees and the resolutions and the Councils of the thirteenth century were authoritative literally for the later Castilian Inquisition too. The detailed inquisitorial decrees of the Church of the middle of the thirteenth century are on their part the result of usage during several decades—the result of an integral development which, beginning at the end of the twelfth century, we can clearly trace through its different stages. There is no point in maintaining that the beginnings of the ecclesiastical inquisition in the thirteenth century must be understood as having been influenced by Jewish procedure.

The Inquisition of the Church remained from its beginnings, and thus also in its further development, an independent institution operating according to internal logical laws. Both the general papal Inquisition of the thirteenth century and the Castilian Inquisition of Torquemada were basically—except of course for the many irregular acts perpetrated by them both—courts organized according to comprehensive rules and regulations, which were drawn up and put into practice in the first half of the thirteenth century. This fact has nothing to do with an ethical and historical appraisal of the institution as such. It merely proves how absurd it is to attempt to put the responsibility for its legal forms upon the Jews.

In the lines of development of the ecclesiastical inquisition, on the one hand, and that of Jewish criminal jurisdiction on the other, there may perhaps be seen some analogous features; but principally, both developments are limited by their own inherent laws.

The inquisitional court was a tribunal for matters of faith

authorized by the pope and independent of the local and provincial institutions. It wandered, according to the task it had to perform, from place to place. In the Jewish communities, treatment of religious questions was part of the internal discipline and remained essentially the concern of the local community. Theoretical religious matters generally were not an object of judicial or political procedure, as far as it was not a matter of denying rabbinic tradition in principle. This problem ceased to exist in western Europe after the twelfth century, with the disappearance of the Karaites. The public discussion of abstract questions of faith arose again in the Jewish communities during the thirteenth century, and this obviously in connection with events in the Christian world. But never have there been in Jewish communities special tribunals for matters of faith.

Incidentally, it is also necessary to note that Sánchez Albornoz and Américo Castro confuse and misconstrue the term *malsin*. The informer against whom court action is taken in the cases cited from the Jewish court is an individual who, by going to the Gentiles and relating vicious falsehoods concerning Jewish law and religion, endangers the very existence of Jewish communities in the Diaspora. It does not properly refer to the slandering of individuals; and it is almost superfluous to mention that the testimony of *malsinim* was, on principle, not accepted in Jewish courts.

- Adret *She'eloth u-Teshuboth ha-RaShBA* (Responsa of R. Solomon b. Abraham ibn Adret), vols. I-VIII¹
- Anuari Anuari del Institut d'Estudis Catalans
- Anuario Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español
- Asher *She'eloth u-Teshuboth ha-RASh* (Responsa of R. Asher b. Yehiel), Venice, 1607
- BABL Boletín de la Academia de Buenas Letras, Barcelona
- BAE Biblioteca de Autores Españoles
- BAER Fritz (Yitzhak) Baer, *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien: Urkunden und Regesten*. Vol. I—Aragonien und Navarra; Vol. II—Kastilien/Inquisitionsakten
- BAER, Aragonien Fritz Baer, *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im Königreich Aragonien während des 13. und 14- Jahrhunderts*
- BAH Boletín de la Academia de la Historia, Madrid
- CDIA Colección de documentos inéditos del archivo general de la Corona de Aragon
- EUC Estudis Universitaris Catalans, Barcelona
- Graetz Heinrich Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*. Dritte verbesserte Auflage, 11 volumes
- JQR Jewish Quarterly Review (New Series, unless otherwise indicated)
- MGWJ Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
- MHE Memorial Historico Español
- RABM Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, Madrid
- Régné Jean Régné, "Catalogue des actes de Jaime I, Pedro III et Alfonso III, rois d'Aragon, concernant les Juifs (1213–1291) ... et sous le règne de Jaime II (1291–1327)," in REJ, vols. 60–70, 73, 75–78.
- REJ Revue des Etudes Juives
- RIBaSh *She'eloth u-Teshuboth ha-RIBaSh* (Responsa of R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet)
- Sefarad Sefarad : Revista de la Escuela de Estudios Hebraicos (Instituto Arias Montano). Madrid, 1941-
- Tarbiz Tarbiz: A Quarterly for Jewish Studies (Hebrew). The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1929/30-
- Zion Zion : A Quarterly for Research in Jewish History (Hebrew). New Series, Jerusalem, 1935/36-
- Qua ex auctoritate magister leronimus Messiam venisse illumque Iesum Christum esse, cum tempore illo, quadraginta scilicet annis ante*

1. Volume VIII is entitled *She'eloth u-Teshuboth ha-RaShBA ha-meyuhasoth le-ha-RaMBaN* (Responsa of R. Solomon ibn Adret ascribed to Nachmanides).

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. See in general Heinrich Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, vols. I-III (1908–1922). J. Ernesto Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II de Aragón, Su vida familiar*, vols. I-II (Barcelona, 1948). ⇐

2. Cf. *Libros de Tesorería*, ed. González Hurtebise, and Régné, *REJ*, nos. 2399, 2426. ⇐

3. Baer, *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien. Urkunden und Regesten*, vols. I and II (I-Aragonien und Navarra; II-Kastilien/Inquisitionsakten) (Berlin, 1929–1936), henceforth cited as Baer I and II. The reference here is to Baer I, no. 144. See also Régné, nos. 2520, 2912. ⇐

4. Baer I, no. 147. ⇐

5. Régné, nos. 2433, 2683 f., 2690 f., 2707 f., 2741, 2761, 3019, 3051, 3053, 3066. See also the Laws of the *Cortes* for the above-mentioned years which were not recorded by Régné. ⇐

6. For the material below, see Régné, no. 2619 f. concerning Moses Aventurel, and cf. Baer II, pp. 90 ff., n. 1. For Isaac (Çac) ibn Wakar, see vol. I, p. 404, n. 41. For the notary of Moslem records in Elche, see Régné, no. 2886. ⇐

7. See vol. I, p. 414, n. 69. ⇐

8. Bahiel's letter has been published by Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, III, no. 242. For the appointment of the Jewish scribe for Arabic documents, see *ibid.*, I, Introduction, pp. lix ff. For Jewish interpreters during the early years of James II's reign, see Régné, no. 2524 *et seq.* See also vol. I, pp. 410–411, n. 49. ⇐

9. For further information on the Jewish doctors, see the letters which I published. Baer I, nos. 149, 186. See also Régné, no. 2794, and Rubio, *EUC*, III. For information on Judah Bonsenyor, see A. Rubio y Lluch, *Documents per l'història de la cultura catalana mig-èval*, I and II, Index. Judah's book *Llibre de Paraules e dits de Savis e Filosofo*s has been reprinted three times on the basis of various manuscripts. See *EUC*, XV, pp. 116 ff. J. Cardoner Planas, "Nuevos datos acerca de Jahuda Bonsenyor," *Sefarad*, IV (1944), 287 f. J. M. Millás Vallicrosa, *Las tablas astronómicas del rey D. Pedro el Ceremonioso* (Madrid-Barcelona, 1962), p. 57. The other scholars mentioned here can all be found in Rubio (see above). See also above, vol. I, p. 411, n. 19, and the articles of Cardoner and Francisca Vendrell, *Sefarady* vols. I, III and IX. ⇐

10. See vol. I, pp. 417 f. ⇐

11. Baer I, no. 138. ⇐

12. *Arch. gen. de la Cor. de Aragon*, Reg. 99 f., 216 v. ⇐

13. Finke, *Acta Arag.*, III, no. 49. ⇐

14. Baer I, no. 157. ⇐

15. Bernard Gui, *Manuel de l'inquisiteur*, ed. and tr. by G. Mollat (Paris, 1926–1927), vol. II, pp. 6–19: *de perfidia Judeorum*. ⇐

16. Arnaldo de Villanova's proposals can be found in Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles*, III (1917), p. lxxxviii. Villanova proposed that the Jews be offered the choice of conversion or exile, as was done in England and France. Concerning Villanova, see vol. I, Index. ⇐

17. For the resettlement of the French exiles in Aragon, see Régné, nos. 2860, 2870, 2873, *et seq.* See also the *Libros de Tesorería* in the *Archivo del Real Patrimonio* in Barcelona, libro de Pedro March. We learn here (pp. 56 ff.) that the Jews of Gerona were permitted to accommodate ten families of French exiles. To acquire this permit two Jews of Gerona paid 1,000 *solidi*. On p. 57, the bailiff lists the sum of 2072 *solidi* 7 *den.* which he received from the Jew Vidal de Bolunya, a draper "*que fo de Tolosa, foragitat de la terra del rey de França.*" See also Fita, *BAH*, vol. LXV (1914), pp. 253 ff., where mention is made of certain promissory notes belonging to one Abba Mari Duran from Verdun s. Garonne which turned up in the town of Solsona. J. Miret y Sans, "Le massacre des juifs de Montclus," *REJ*, LIII, 257 f. ⇐

18. Baer I, no. 164. ⇐

19. For the following affairs, see Baer I, nos. 166, 168, 180, 184; also, the documents in Régné mentioned in these notes; Finke, *Acta Arag.*, II, nos. 540, 542, 543, 548; and F. Fita, "Los judíos mallorquines y el concilio de Viena," *España Hebrea*, II (1898), 165 ff. (BAH, 1900). Morel-Fatio, *REJ*, IV (1882), 43 f.; Antonio Pons, "Los judíos del reino de Mallorca durante los siglos XIII-XIV," *Hispania*, XX (1960), pp. 32 f., 449 f., nos. 50, 51, 55, 61. See also my *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im Königreich Aragonien* (Berlin, 1913), pp. 61 ff. In regard to

- the synagogue in Tarragona, see *Lettres communes de Jean XXII*, ed. by G. Mollat, vol. III (Paris, 1906), no. 10635. A repentant *converso* (*bahall teçuva*) of Montblanch by the name of Johannes Ferrandi is mentioned in Baer I, no. 168; and in Navarre, in 1319, a *converso* of the same name (Johan Ferrandez) who had returned to the Jewish fold was burned at the stake (Baer I, p. 948, no. 585). Regarding the fate of the *conversos* from Lerida, see Baer I, p. 206, no. 166. Further information is to be found in Johannes Vincke, *Documenta sel. mutuas civitatis Arago-Cathalaunicae et ecclesiae relationes illustrantia* (Barcelona, 1936), no. 368. ⇐
20. Baer I, no. 184, and whatever other sources are listed there; see also Régné, nos. 3389, 3396; Rubio, *Documents*, II, no. 52. On the Inquisition held in Huesca until 1333, see Vincke, *op. cit.*, no. 502. The Infante's letter of 1335 which is mentioned below has been printed in *EUC*, XIX (1934), 231. ⇐
21. *Livnath ha-Sapir* (Jerusalem, 1913), fol. 65^b-66. ⇐
22. Baer I, no. 176, and the literature there referred to. An additional edict of James II can be found in Vincke, *op. cit.*, no. 354. ⇐
23. On the burning of the Talmud in 1320, see N. Valois, *Histoire Littéraire de France*, 34 (Paris, 1914), p. 409. ⇐
24. Baer II, no. 177. ⇐
25. See the literature mentioned in Baer I, no. 590. *Archivo general de Navarra* (Pamplona), *Cuentas*, vol. 22, *passim*. Diputacion Foral de Navarra, *Catalogo del Archivo general, sección de Comptos, Documentos*, vol. I, por Ramón Castro (1952), no. 884 f. Alfonso IV's edict protecting those Jews of to Aragon can be found in Rubio, *Documents*, I, no. 73. ⇐
26. Baer I, no. 201. ⇐
27. Baer I, no. 190. ⇐
28. *Even Bohan* (Lemberg, 1865), pp. 24 f., 35 f. ⇐
29. *Livnath ha-Sapir*, fol. 9^b, 25-26; 38^b. Several passages contain critical admonishment and veiled references to the approaching end-of-days. ⇐
30. Baer I, no. 189. Responsa of R. Isaac b. Sheshet (RIBaSh), nos. 214, 228; the text quotations are from his responsum no. 228. ⇐
31. Baer I, no. 206. See also Cardoner-Vendrell and J. Rius Serra, *Sefarad*, vols. VII and XII. ⇐
32. Baer I, nos. 230-232, 238, 240-245, 253. *Emek Habacha*, ed. Letteris, p. 66. The Responsa of Rabbi Nissim b. Reuben Gerondi, nos. 18-20, 28, 47 (*anussim!*). A. López de Meneses: in *Estudios de la Edad media de la Corona de Araaon*, VI (Saragossa, 1956), and in *Sefarad*, XIX (1959). See also vol. I, 448, n. 47. ⇐
33. Baer I, nos. 253, 258, 261, 262. On R. Moses Nathan, see H. Schirman, *Ha-Shira ha-Ivrith bi-Sefarad ubi-Provence* (Tel Aviv, 1957), pp. 541 f. ⇐
34. RIBaSh, New Responsa, no. 9. ⇐
35. Cf. Baer I, nos. 595-605. *Archivo general de Navarra, Catalogo*, vols. I-XXIX (1952-1961) (see above, n. 25). ⇐
36. The reader will find additional details among the documents pertaining to this period in Baer I. On commerce in Valencia, see RIBaSh, Responsa, no. 306. The other sizable aljamas will be dealt with below. ⇐
37. Interesting material on these Jewish physicians and scholars will be found by the reader in Rubio's two volumes and in Baer I—for our

purposes here it is unnecessary to go into the matter in further detail. See also my review on Rubio's book, *MGWJ*, LXVIII (1924); also, J. Miret y Sans, *REJ*, LXXV (1909). On the Jewish physicians who served at the court of Pedro IV during the early years of his reign, see above, n. 31. Concerning the astronomer Jacob Corsino, see the important work of Prof. José M. Millás Vallicrosa, *Las tablas astronómicas del rey Don Pedro el Ceremonioso* (Madrid-Barcelona, 1962). See also (concerning vol. I, 391, n. 47) *idem*, *La obra enciclopédica Yesodé he-tebuna u-migdal ha-emuna* (Madrid-Barcelona, 1952); *idem*, *Estudios sobre historia de la ciencia española* (Barcelona, 1949); *idem*, *Nuevos estudios* (Barcelona, 1960). ←

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX

1. On the aljama of Barcelona at this time, see in particular Baer I, documents nos. 285a and 399; cf. also: Is. Loeb, *REJ*, IV (1882), pp. 226 ff.; F. Bofarull y Sans, *Ordinaciones de los concellerses*, *BABL*, VI; Capmany, *Memorias*, vol. II, pp. 156 ff., p. 420; the Responsa of Rabbi Nissim, nos. 38 and 43. I. M. Madurell Marimon, "La contratación laboral judaica y conversa en Barcelona" (1349–1416), *Sefarad*, XVI–XVII (1956–1957). ←

2. See below, chapter X, n. 7. ←

3. See Rosenmann, "Das Lehrhaus des R. Nissim Gerondi in Barcelona," in *Festschrift A. Schwarz* (1917); also Julius Guttmann, *Die Philosophie des Judentums* (Munich, 1933), p. 238; *idem*, *Ha-filosofia shel ha-Yahadut* (Jerusalem, 1952), p. 206; and Asaf's edition of the letters of Rabbi Nissim, Horev (New York, 1937); *Mekoroth u-mehkarim be-toledoth Yisrael* (Jerusalem, 1946), pp. 173–185. From the style of these letters I believe we may assume that Rabbi Nissim participated actively in the drafting of the *takkanoth* of 1354. See also RIBaSh, responsum 447. ←

4. Baer I, no. 284. RIBaSh, responsa nos. 373, 376, 377. In particular see responsum 373 in the letter to R. Hasdai Solomon of Tudela. ←

5. Baer I, no. 288; RIBaSh, no. 380. ←

6. Baer I, no. 338. Cf. RIBaSh, no. 228. ←

7. Baer I, no. 381. Regarding the constitution of the municipality of Barcelona, see Carreras, *Ciutat de Barcelona*, p. 356. *CDIA*, VIII, pp. 245 f. See also the constitution of Lerida, *ibid.*, p. 237 ff. ←

8. Baer I, nos. 330, 371. Cf. Vidal's article in *REJ*, XV–XVI (1887–1888). ←

9. *REJ*, X, p. 120; Baer I, nos. 214, 310, 366, 372, 385, 386, 395. ←

10. R. Simon ben Zemach Duran, in his Responsa (part I, 51), wrote of the community of Majorca, "Truly, I know that once it was a mighty congregation of over one thousand householders, wherein dwelt, in olden times, great rabbis and scholars," etc. Concerning the wealth of the members of the aljama, see RIBaSh, no. 153. For the maritime enterprises of Majorcan Jewry, see in particular Baer I, nos. 273, 301, 311, 315, 356, *et. seq.*; also, Fita-Llabrés, nos. 39, 40, 46, 50, 69, *et. seq.*; *REJ*, IV (1882), 54, 55; Rubio, *Documents*, vol. II, no. 293; the Responsa of R. Nissim, no. 45; RIBaSh, no. 377; and RIBaSh, New

Responsa, no. 25. In Baer I, no. 335, we learn of a certain Jew who was granted a monopoly on the manufacture of soap throughout the Kingdom of Majorca. On the question of slaves, see Fita-Llabrés, nos. 65, 83, 85. (See also above, vol. I, 415–417, n. 79.) On the attitude of the *consulado del mar* towards the Jews, see *ibid.*, no. 100. On the ransoming of captives, see Baer I, no. 248. On the uprising of the downtrodden population, see *ibid.*, nos. 86, 92, 93, 94. For information on Jewish artisans, see *REJ*, IV (1882), p. 45. On the sale of lands and the necessity to make more lenient the application of the halakhic viewpoint on the usury laws, see RIBaSh, no. 305. See also A. Pons, “Los judíos del reino de Mallorca durante los siglos XIII–XIV,” *Hispania*, XVI (1956) (Pons I), and *Hispania*, XX (1960) (Pons II). See Pons I, 420 ff., concerning overseas trade (p. 423: Beirut!). On Judah (Leo) Mosconi, see E. Aguilo-Isr. Lévi, *REJ*, XXXIX (1899), 242 ff.; XXXX (1900), 168 f.; Rubio, *Documents*, I, no. 294: maestro Leo Grech. Pons I, pp. 224–231, and *Apendice documental*, nos. 38 and 56: *maestre Leo Metge* (a. 1357), *maestre Leo Mosconi, metge, fisich del senyor rey* (a. 1365). See also J. N. Hillgarth and B. Narkiss, “A List of Hebrew Books (1330) and a Contract to Illuminate Manuscripts (1335) from Majorca,” *REJ* (1961), 297–320. =

11. On the development of the internal constitution of the *aljama* of Majorca, see Fita-Llabrés, nos. 22–24, 26, 30, 34, 45, 61, 62. On the ineligibility of physicians and brokers, see *ibid.*, no. 71. A similar restriction was applied by the municipality of Perpignan to its physicians on the grounds that they were only members of the Second Estate—see Vidal, *Hist. de Perpignan*, p. 84. For the Council of Thirty and the feuding between families and estates, see Fita-Llabrés, nos. 91, 106, and Baer I, nos. 318, 319, 323, 328, 331. Cf. the history of the municipal constitution of Majorca in Piferrer-Quadrado, *Islas Baleares* (Barcelona, 1888), p. 204, and Quadrado, *Forenses y ciudadanos* (Madrid, 1847), pp. 67 ff. See also Pons I–II. =

12. For the jurisdiction of the *aljama* of Majorca in criminal cases, see Baer I, nos. 203, 356, 367, and p. 647, the end of no. 401. See also the New Responsa of RIBaSh, nos. 24–26. Regarding the *aljama*’s own peculiar customs and laws, see RIBaSh, nos. 374–377, and the Responsa of R. Simon ben Zemach Duran, II, no. 256; III, no. 150. R. Isaac b. Sheshet’s final thoughts on the administration of justice in the Majorcan *aljama* can be found in his responsa nos. 52 and 107. R. Simon b. Zemach Duran (responsa part I, no. 58) polemically attacks the views of R. Isaac b. Sheshet, without openly contradicting the latter’s opinion concerning this matter. =

13. On R. Solomon Zarfati, see RIBaSh, nos. 374–378. On R. Vidal Ephraim Gerondi, see *ibid.*, and the Responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach Duran, II, no. 256. R. Vidal is to be identified with the Vidal Afrahim whom R. Isaac Nifoci, on behalf of the infante Don Juan, commissioned to prepare “*obres de strologia*” in 1381 (Rubio, *Documents*, I, no. 319). His brother, Belshom Ephraim, plied the same trade (see the interesting Responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach, I, nos. 163–166), and in 1380 was engaged with Isaac Nifoci in the manufacture of *astrolabes* (Rubio, I, no. 312). In 1359, Isaac Nifoci was invited by King Pedro IV to come to Barcelona for the purpose of constructing watches and *astrolabes*; some time between 1360 and 1362, we find him referred to as

"maestre astalabre de casa del senyor rey, domesticus noster, magister seu artifex stelaborum." He was rewarded by the king with the sinecure of ritual slaughterer and inspector to the aljama of Majorca, and in 1380 he entered the service of the infante Juan as *maestre de fer stralaus* (Rubio, *Documents*, vol. I, nos. 312, 319; vol. II, pp. 128 ff., 144 ff.). See also Pons I, p. 249. Concerning his conversion and atonement, see below, chapter X, n. 5. On Cresques Abraham and his son, Judah Cresques, see my article in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. V, 711–712; see also, Goncalo Reparaz, *Mestre Jacome de Malhorca* (Coimbra, 1930), and my review in *Kiryath-Sefer*, X (1933–1934), 82. A complete bibliography on Judah and his maps appeared in the journal *EUC*, XIII, p. 221. See also Pons I, pp. 251–255. On Moses Hakim (Faquim), see Baer I, no. 401. On R. Jonah Desmaestre (Biona del Maestre), see the subject index in Baer I; also, Fita-Llabrés, nos. 110, 112; RIBaSh, no. 378; the Responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach, I, no. 129; II, no. 26; and Jaulus, *MGWJ*, XXIII (1874), p. 250; and below, ch. X, n. 5. R. Simon b. Zemach, in part II of his responsa, no. 129, says of the incident involving Don Todros that it happened "in the home of my teacher and father-in-law, Rabbi Jonah, may he rest in peace, in Aragon." The last word was apparently mistranscribed by the copyist. On Aaron Abdalhaf, see Baer I, no. 350, and no. 401, p. 647. Pons II, no. 135. ←

14. For the aljama of Valencia, see in particular Baer I, pp. 378, 380, nos. 286, 296, 302, 307, and references in the index; also RIBaSh, nos. 371, 387, 389. The distinguished physician Moses Porpoler (*ibid.*, no. 361) is also mentioned in Baer I, no. 249. For members of the Tahuel family, see chapter X, n. 4. Salamias Nasi, whose name appears in responsum no. 266 of RIBaSh, was convicted in the years 1380–1384 of black magic and conjuring (Rubio, *Documents*, I, no. 247). See also Baer I, no. 397. ←

15. On the community of Saragossa, see the index to Baer I, and in particular, M. Serrano y Sanz, *Orígenes de la Dominación Española en America* (Madrid, 1918). Concerning artisans, see in particular Baer I, p. 622. On artisans who were appointed judges, see Baer I, no. 394. On artisans at the royal court, see Baer I, no. 215. On the *draperos*, see in particular no. 392; also, vol. I, chapter V, n. 19 (p. 425). On Junez Trigo, see the index to Baer I. On Don Moses b. Alazar, see RIBaSh, no. 445; also Serrano, p. 451, and the articles by Serrano listed in Baer I, p. 1089. Concerning the pious fraternities, see Baer, *MGWJ*, LXIX (1925), p. 58. Cantera, *Sefarad*, VII, 147 ff. R. Joel ibn Sho'eb, 'Olat Shabbath, f. 138^v 144, 146 f.; Baer I, p. 531. ←

16. On the position of the "ree Jews," see Baer I, no. 329. On the de la Cavalleria family, see Serrano, *ibid.*, p. 180, and the articles by Serrano listed in Baer I, p. 1089. See also the article by Francisca Vendrell Gallostra, "portaciones documentales para el estudio de la familia Caballeria," *Sefarad*, III (1943), 114–154. Wherever I omit specific citations, reader is asked to consult Serrano's book and the index to Baer I. Vidal de la Cavalleria died in 1373. His last will can be found in Serrano, p. 184, n. 1. He is also mentioned in RIBaSh, no. 360. The poems of Solomon de la Cavalleria were published by S. Bernstein, *Horev* (New York), vol. III, pp. 101ff. See also RIBaSh, nos. 395, 435. On Benvenist de la Cavalleria, see, in addition to the many documents

in Baer I (no. 384 in particular), Steinschneider, *Hamazkir*, XV (1875), p. 56; also, S. Bernstein's introduction to the *Divan of Solomon de Piera* (see below, chapter X, n. 30); and RIBaSh, nos. 249, 370. On Alazar Golluf, see the index to Baer I. =

17. For Rabbi Astruc Hasdai, see Baer I, no. 298. Responsa nos. 382–518, and 187–252 of RIBaSh belong to the period of R. Isaac's ministry in Saragossa. See his comments on the state of the Saragossa aljama in responsum 388. Concerning the case of Isaac Açfora, see RIBaSh, no. 395, and Serrano, Appendix 1. See also Baer I, no. 287. On Solomon Abnarrabi and the reforms in communal administration, see Baer I, nos. 341, 342. On R. Moses aben Abez, see the index to Baer I. He is mentioned several times by Serrano, and we shall have more to say about him when we deal with the crisis of 1391. His role as a communal leader and delegate extraordinary is first mentioned in 1383 (Baer I, p. 554). That he came from Tudela can be determined from RIBaSh's responsum no. 447—a fact which is borne out by his family name. Concerning his poetry, see *Hamazkir*, XIV (1874), p. 79; also Bernstein's introduction to the *Divan of de Piera*, p. xiii. For BJBaSh's dispute with Solomon Abnarrabi, see Baer I, nos. 375 and 383. His intentions to leave Saragossa are dealt with in his responsum no. 192. For material on this period in Aragon, see *Se farad*, index volume. =

18. Baer I, n. 317. Compare the privileges belonging to the aljama of Teruel, which come under discussion in the responsa of RIBaSh, nos. 234–239. See below, n. 23 and Appendix: The Inquisition of the Catholic Church and the Criminal Jurisdiction of the Jewish Communities. =

19. Baer I, no. 356. =

20. *Ibid.*, no. 398. =

21. *Ibid.*, no. 396. =

22. For further details, see below, n. 23. =

23. On the life of R. Isaac b. Sheshet, see the article by H. Jaulus, *MGWJ*, XXIII–XXIV (1875); A. Atlas, *Hakerem*, 1868. With the aid of documents, it is now possible to establish more precisely certain biographical details. (See n. 17.) R. Isaac's remarks on R. Solomon Zarfati are in responsum no. 377. If the reader compares them with the encomia that R. Isaac lavished upon the same R. Solomon, he will scarcely believe his eyes! For the remarks of R. Hayyim Galipapa, see *ibid.*, no. 394. On the supremacy of talmudic law over scientific rationalism, see responsum no. 447. See also R. Isaac's objections to medical testimony in criminal trials (responsum no. 251). R. Isaac's familiarity with secular culture, as well as that of his brother, is attested to by the laudatory words of R. Shaltiel Hen (no. 469). R. Isaac was in contact with the two members of the Cavalleria family, with R. Judah, the grandson of R. Asher b. Yehiel, Solomon Halevi of Burgos, R. Isaac Alhadib (in his responsum no. 240, R. Isaac writes to R. Judah b. Asher: "I am in possession of three treatises by the commentator Ben Sini [Avicenna] given to me by that God-fearing man, your pupil, R. Isaac Alhadib"; regarding Isaac Alhadib, see Freimann, *Jahrbuch der jüdisch-literarischen Gesellschaft*, XIII (1919), p. 155; I. Davidson, *Tarbiz* (1940), p. III; and D. Kahana, *Hashiloah*, X (1902–1903), p. 350), and R. Samuel Matut (see Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, p. 370). On the "lightheaded and wanton men who sorely try the

Rabbinate,” see responsum no. 445. On the artisans of Murviedro, see responsum no. 352; on R. Isaac’s activities, no. 387; on his responsum to a Christian official, no. 510; on his letter to Hasdai Craschas, no. 269. R. Isaac’s remarks on communal autonomy can be found towards the end of responsum no. 272. By way of contrast, see the words of warning in no. 518; also, no. 202, which he signs, together with a fellow-judge of Saragossa, with the motto, “the imprecations of the undersigned rest upon the transgressor.” For R. Isaac’s opinion of the *takkanoth*, see no. 371. On his forceful exercise of rabbinical authority, see nos. 234, 387. On the case of the adulterer, see no. 351; on the criminal case of Salamanca, no. 251; on his opinion of the royal officials, nos. 387 (towards the end of the responsum), 234, 457; on the informer of Teruel, nos. 234–239; on his role as a peacemaker, nos. 373, 448, 473. Concerning R. Isaac’s criticisms of the intemperance of his generation, see also responsa nos. 297, 209, 509. In his responsum no. 425, he is asked by a scholar from Huesca: “How is it that it has become a common saying in the mouths of men, ‘It is permissible [to have sexual relations] with an unmarried Jewish woman’; can it be that our blessed rabbis sanctioned prostitution in this world?” To which R. Isaac replies: “God forbid that our blessed rabbis should have sanctioned such a thing as prostitution. . . . Let us then cry out against our generation whose ways are unbecoming. But let our leaders feign ignorance of this custom, lest they cause our people’s gentry to be ensnared by Christian women.” See also no. 395, on the question of concubinage. In responsum no. 508, R. Isaac praises R. David b. Sho‘eb of Calatayud for his counter-measures against “wicked traitors,” “adulterers who defile the holy seed.” The matter at hand concerned a Jew from Jerusalem, who, after wandering through many cities in France and Germany, arrived in Barcelona and eventually came to Saragossa. There he testified that a certain Castilian Jew, having taken a wife and become a schoolteacher in Jerusalem, had passed away. On the basis of his testimony, the supposed wife of the man reputed to be dead, who was then living in Saragossa, resorted to various stratagems to obtain rabbinical permission to remarry. Scholarly sentiment opposed the granting of such permission—A. M. Hershtman, *R. Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet and His Times* (New York, 1943). ←

24. For information on Hasdai Crescas, see the index to Baer I, p. 1103 (Azday Cresques). In 1367, he headed the list of *ne‘emanim* (*secretarii*) of the *aljama* of Barcelona, and from that time on he was among the foremost leaders both of his own community and of all Aragonese Jewry. See in particular his activity in the year 1383, Baer I, p. 542, and no. 363. For details of his personal life, see no. 387. He was well-off and carried on financial transactions. Nothing specific is known about the services he may have performed for the crown. On the rabbinical and judicial authority granted to him by the king, see nos. 387, 391, 396. His quarrel with the Jewish courtiers of Saragossa is guardedly alluded to in his letters (see Oxford ms. no. 1984, fol. 249, col. 2, and British Museum ms., add. no. 27168, fol. 105). See also, *REJ*, XVI (1888), p. 34. Hasdai’s career during and after the catastrophe of 1391 will be dealt with below. See as well chapter X, nn. 7, 49, 50. ←

25. In 1389, at the onset of Juan’s reign, the problem of usury was debated at a meeting of the Cortes of Monzon. I discovered the above-

mentioned determinations in the royal registry in Barcelona (Reg. 1947, f. 191), but cannot recall whether they have appeared in print. The edicts affecting the Jews issued by the city council of Barcelona have been published by Bofarull y Sans, *BABL*, VI. On anti-Jewish outbreaks in the 1370's, see my *Aragonien* (1913), p. 163 and Pons I, p. 337. ←

26. A deserving subject for a monograph is Francesc Eximeniç and his relations with the Jews. See: Massó Torrents, *Anuari del Institut d'Estudis Catalans*, III (1909–1910); I. Probst, *Revue Hispanique*, XXXIX (1917), P. Andres Ivars, *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, XV (1921). Since my last visit to Spain (1929) several additional articles have appeared, as well as sections of Francesc Eximeniç's enormous treatise *El Crestà*, which I have not managed to see. Probst (p. 44) reviews Francesc's handling of the question of whether a Christian king may legitimately appoint a Jewish treasurer. During my stay in Barcelona, I managed to glance briefly at the first part of Francesc's treatise *Primer del Crestià*; it is full of polemical attacks against the Jewish religion. Francesc refers to the book *Pugio fidei*, to the *Guide for the Perplexed* and the *Mishneh Torah* of Maimonides, and to several oral discussions with "a great Jewish rabbi." In his book *Kelimath ha-Goyim* ("The Shame of the Gentiles"), Prof et Duran writes (*hazofeh*, IV, p. 40): "Such was the answer I made to a certain gentile scholar by the name of Buan [?] who came to me En Filis [?] and told me," etc. Is it possible that this is a mistaken reference to Francesc Eximeniç? On Nicolaus Eymerich, the author of the book *Directorium Inquisitionum*, see my *Aragonien*, pp. 63–69. Fragments of an inquisitor's notebook have been published by Omont, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, vol. 66, and by Régné, *RES*, LU (1906). See also the documents listed in the index to Baer I, p. 1165, under the entry Inquisition. ←

27. Coroleu, *Documents historichs catalans del siglo XIV* (Barcelona, 1899), p. 61. ←

28. On the trial of a Jew in 1367 for desecrating the host, see above, pp. 38–39. In 1369 the infante promulgated several laws restricting the area of Jewish residence in Cervera (Baer I, no. 293); this, too, indicates the religious influence. On the trial of 1377, see the article by J. Miret y Sans, "El procès de les hosties contrals jueus d'Osca en 1377," *Anuari*, IV (1911–1912). ←

29. The command to translate the *Mishneh Torah* can be found in Rubio, *Documents*, vol. I, no. 338. For the other events of 1383, see Baer I, nos. 356, 361, 363, 379. ←

30. On the relations of Don Juan and his wife with the Jewish scholars, see above, ch. VIII, n. 37, and *supra*, nn. 13, 21. On Cresques de Vivers, see Baer I, no. 373, and the article of A. López de Meneses in *Se farad*, XIV (1954). On Alazar Golluf and his son, see Baer I, no. 390. ←

31. Baer I, no. 404. ←

NOTES TO CHAPTER X

1. Baer II, nos. 221, 247, 259. ←

2. On the persecutions in Castile, cf. Baer II, no. 248 *et seq.*, and Baer I, no. 411. The elegy on the Burgos community was published by H. Schirman in Qobes *Al Yad*, 3 (XIII) (Jerusalem, 1940), p. 64.

See also S. Bernstein, "An unknown Elegy of R. Yehiel b. Asher," *Sinai*, XXIX (1941), 209, with the emendations of A. Mirsky, *ibid.*, p. 399. The elegy Adath Yeshurun has been recently republished by C. Roth, "A Hebrew Elegy on the Martyrs of Toledo, 1391," *JQR*, XXXIX (1948), 129 ff. The documents from the municipal archives of Burgos have been republished by L. Suarez Fernandez, *Hispania* (1952), 163 f.; T. López Mata, *BAH*, 129 (1951), 358 ff.; and F. Cantera Burgos, *Alvar García de Santa María y su familia de conversos*, Historia de la Judería de Burgos y de sus conversos más egregios (Madrid, 1952), pp. 21 f., 53 f. See also H. S. de Soprani, "Contribución a la historia de la judería de Jerez de la Frontera," *Sefarad*, XI (1951), 349 f. The author cites a document of August 20, 1391 in which some converted Jews of Jerez sold certain lands adjacent to the Jewish cemetery to a Dominican monastery. Forty-nine of the converts, most of them artisans, are listed by their Christian names. ←

3. Baer I, nos. 407, 408. ←

4. See Baer I, nos. 409, 410, and the articles by Danvila and Chabás cited in Baer I, p. 1088. Among those baptized in Valencia was "lo gran Don Samuel Abravalla"; also baptized were several wealthy men, the doctor Maestre Humer Tahuel, who was forcefully converted (Chabás, *El Archivo*, VII, 191), and his relative, Içach Tahuel (Danvila, *ibid.*, V, 406). Humer Tahuel was a distinguished physician (together with a Christian physician he was assigned by the crown in 1386 to examine a Jewish doctor), and was one of the *adelantados* of his community (Baer I, nos. 307, 380). Regarding both him and Içach Tahuel, see the responsa of RIBaSh, no. 309. We possess no documentary information concerning R. Isaac b. Sheshet in these days. Prior to the pogrom, a Jew approached R. Isaac and requested that he declare a public fast, for he had [fore] seen a great fire in the Rabbi's house. But he [R. Isaac] discounted it. (The responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach Duran, II, no. 128.) According to *Manuel de novells ardis* of the town council of Barcelona, I, 16, the Jewish rabbi (*lo gran clerga lur rau*) was baptized in Valencia and put on the Dominican habit. There is no reason to give credence to this report, or to associate it with R. Isaac b. Sheshet. ←

5. See Piferrer-Quadrado, *Islas Baleares*, p. 201 ff., and the articles by Llabrés and Quadrado which are cited in Baer I, p. 1087. Unfortunately, I do not now possess complete lists of all those who were baptized. I made only a few marginal notes on the list of those men who purchased the books of R. Judah Mosconi (REJ, XXXIX-XXXX); among those baptized were: Joseph Eleazar (who, as late as April, 1391, interceded on behalf of his community in a case having to do with the hanging of an informer—Baer I, 647); Nathan de Osca; Samuel Hakim; the widows of Magaluff Faruch and Sayt Mili; Moxi Natiar (apparently an extremely old and wealthy man—see Fita-Llabrés, no. 68); Abraham Sasportas (who seems to be identical with the man by the same name mentioned in responsum no. 20 of R. Isaac b. Sheshet and in responsum I, no. 58 of R. Simon B. Zemach Duran. Would this mean that he managed to flee? See REJ, XXXXII [1901], 278); and Maimon Shulal, Mosconi's son-in-law (who was still active in communal leadership in 1390—see Fita-Llabrés, nos. 110, 114, and Rubio, *Documents*, II, no. 330). Quadrado, *Islas Baleares*, p. 229, brings evidence of the flight of Magaluff Natiar. Particularly noteworthy among those converts who

did not return to Judaism is Judah Cresques, the famed cartographer (see above, ch. IX, n. 13). According to documents published in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Arqueol. Luliana*, vol. VII (1897–1898), pp. 149 and 176, Judah Cresques' sister and mother also converted—the latter, indeed, remained with her son. His wife, however, left him. On Isaac Nifoci, the astronomer, who was forcefully converted and later repented, see below, n. 44. R. Vidal Ephraim (Gironi) is given the epithet “saintly martyr” by R. Simon b. Zemach Duran in his Responsa, II, no. 256, and III, no. 123. Several other persons mentioned in the Responsa of R. Isaac b. Sheshet and R. Simon b. Zemach are to be identified with Majorcan Jews who reappear in the list of converts. R. Simon b. Zemach (Responsa, III, no. 14) speaks with a certain amount of sarcasm about the worthiness of a Jew who was martyred in Majorca: “Many, I should say, were saved. I was together with this man who was killed, and the Lord saved me.” In his book, *Magen Avoth*, on Avoth IV, 5, R. Simon writes: “Verily, we possessed much property and had studied the art of medicine, a science by which men might live honorably in Christian lands. But because of the sins of our generation persecution was decreed for us whithersoever we were in those lands, and our lives were made forfeit and we left all our possessions behind there. And what we were able to save we gave to the Gentiles, so that we should not compromise ourselves and be forced to convert.” In the first edition of my book I wrote that R. Jonah Desmaestre was also among the martyrs. I can now find no evidence for this. Dr. J. Sussman has pointed out to me that members of R. Simon b. Zemach Duran's family make mention of a responsum dealing with the *conversos* which was written by R. Jonah. See the Responsa of R. Solomon b. Simon Duran, no. 89; and *Yakhin u'Voaz*, Part I, no. 107, and Part II, no. 31. In the last-mentioned place, for instance, we read: “And R. Jonah Desmaestre, may his memory be blessed, wrote in a responsum that even though these *anussim* are to be considered as converts to idol-worship . . . they are to be trusted as messengers . . . and he submitted several proofs to this effect,” etc. Of course, the problem of the *anussim* had been dealt with before in halakhic discussions, but the usage “these *anussim*” is extremely common after 1391. For further information, see Pons 11, pp. 368 f., and *ibid.*, *Doc.*, nos. 136–143. ←

6. Baer I, nos. 412–416; D. Girona y Llagostera, *Escritos academicos* (Barcelona, 1930), pp. 77–78. ←

7. On the events in Barcelona see, besides Hasdai Crescas' letter, the Latin story published by F. Fita, *España Hebrea*, vol. I (Madrid, 1889), pp. 167 ff. (Graetz, vol. VIII, p. 488); *Manuel de novells ardis*, and the other sources cited in Baer I, no. 416. See also the king's letter of the tenth of August: D. Girona y Llagostera, “Itinerari del rei en Joan I,” *EUC*, XIV, 132. From these letters we learn of the good relations enjoyed by the philosopher-rabbi, the upper clergy of Barcelona, the queen's physician Magister Ramon Querol (*EUC*, XIII, 379; XIV, 157), and the Aragonese aristocrat and diplomat, P. de Queralt. Furthermore, it stands to reason that R. Hasdai was in good standing with the poet Bernard Metge, the responsible author of the documents issued by the royal seal for the protection of the Jews. Regarding the increase in conversion in Barcelona, see *Qobes Al Y ad*, 3 (XIII), p. 68. For the list of *conversos*, see *REJ*, IV (1882), 57 ff. From among the 130 per-

sons listed I have managed to identify thirty-three, both personally and socially. Here are a number of examples: Caravida Çaporta was one of 65 men who in 1383 signed their names to a communal promissory note (*REJ*, IV, 62); Vivan Coffen, a courtier of Pedro IV, was also one of the signers of the note; Maestre Noch (Enoch), son of the notorious Moses Hanoch (see chapter IX, n. 6), was physician to the queen; Maçot Avengena, banker to the royal house and a communal leader for many years, performed an embassy for the king together with R. Hasdai Crescas in 1383 (Baer I, pp. 549 ff.); Abba Mari Rossell appears among the communal notables in 1367 (Baer I, p. 408), and again in 1383; Astruch Çatorra was a communal leader in 1383; Bonjuha Gracia appears among the communal notables in 1367 (Baer I, no. 408), and served as a communal judge and trustee in 1381 (*ibid.*, no. 338); Samuel Benveniste appears as a notable in 1367 and 1383, and it is apparently he to whom R. Isaac b. Sheshet referred when he said (Resp. no. 301): "And this is what I wrote to our esteemed brother, Don Samuel Benveniste, concerning the levirate woman." The above list contains the names of all those who requested the return of property stolen during the rioting, but it is not a complete list of the *conversos* in Barcelona. We do not know whether some of these men later returned to Judaism. See above, n. 4. =

8. See principally, Julian de Chia, *Bandos y bandoleros en Gerona*, vol. I (Gerona, 1888), pp. 170 ff.; Baer I, p. 1045. For information on the martyrs, see also the letter by Profet Duran, in the appendix to *Ma'aseh Ephod* (ed. Jonatan Friedländer and Jacob Kohn [Vienna, 1865], p. 194). Chia mentions the name of Juceph Abraham, who was without a doubt the friend of Duran to whom the letter cited above was sent. On the further development of these events, see: Baer I, nos. 428, 435, 437; D. Girona, *EUC*, XIV, 139 ff.; and *Escritos Academicos*, p. 83. Names of baptized Jews can be found in various documents published by E. C. Girbal, *Revista de Gerona*, XVIII (1894), 33 ff. On the rehabilitation of the community, see Baer I, no. 447. =

9. Baer I, nos. 417, 420; J. L. Villanueva, *Viage literario á las iglesias de España* (Madrid, 1850), XVI, 247. =

10. Baer I, nos. 408, 431, 432, 439. =

11. See F. Carreras i Candi, *Laljama de juheus de Tortosa* (Barcelona, 1928), pp. 153 ff. =

12. See A. Durán y Sanpere, *Discursos lilegits en la Real Academia de Buenas letras de Barcelona* (1924), p. 19. =

13. Baer I, no. 434. =

14. Baer I, nos. 424, 425, 426, 429, 430, 445; *EUC*, XIV, 134, 135; *Ma'aseh Ephod*, p. 14. Mention should be made here of the article by J. M. Sanz Artibucilla, "Los judios de Tarazona en 1391," *Sefarad*, VII (1947), 63 ff. [See also the articles dealing with artists of Jewish descent and with Shemtob b. Isaac Shaprut, *Sefarad*, IV-V (1944-1945).] Sanz Artibucilla mentions in *Sefarad*, VII, on pp. 74-75 and 89-90 an official document of the 20th of July, 1391, which reads as follows: Three Jews, whose names are given, living in Tarazona, sell their drapery shop (*la tienda de la draperia*) with all the cloth (*panyos*) in order to pay their debts; those Jews sold their belongings because of the spreading persecutions: *por la persecución que suena contra los judíos que en otras partes es extrema, hayan oido ellos, por la dita*

razón, e por se descargar et lures deudas pagar. Prof. Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, in *España, un enigma histórico*, II (Buenos Aires, 1956), pp. 203, 204, mentions the content of this document without, as is customary with him, giving the place of print. He remarks: *Cualquier sarcástico poeta (!) podría alcanzar fáciles éxitos refiriendo el miedo de los mismos prestamistas de Tarazona que unos días antes se sentían firmes y actuaban en consecuencia (! !).* ←

15. Baer I, nos. 415, 419, 429, 431. On the figures given by R. Hasdai Crescas in his letter, see my *Aragonien*, pp. 138, 154, 155, nn. 23, 47, 50. Of course, no conclusions can be drawn from this letter in regard to the total number of home owners in Seville and Valencia. ←

16. On the expulsion of the Jews from the castle at Balaguer, see *EUC*, XIV, 134 (the king's letter of August 22). The pardon for Valencia can be found in R. Chabás, *El Archivo*, VII (1893), 195. Such pardons are extremely common in the royal registers, and I was unable to transcribe them in detail. On the trials in Barcelona, see *Manuel de novells ardis*, I, pp. 20 ff. See also the letter of the king to his treasurer written at Villafranca del Panades, on December 5, 1391: "*Per part del bisbe de Barchinona son estats presentats uns capitols tocants convençio fahedora entre nos e ell sobre los culpables eclesiastichs dels avalots i concitacions fetes contral juheus*," ACA, Reg. 1963, f. 3. (Salvador Sanpere y Miquel, *Las costumbres catalanas en tiempo de Juan I* [Gerona, 1878], p. 273.) Concerning the letter to Hasdai Crescas, see AC A, Reg. 1963, fol. 52: "*Lo rey. Com nos per alguns afers tocans nostre servey te haïam de gran necessari, manam te, que vistes les presents, tots altres afers apart posats, vingues a nos . . . Dirigitur nAzday Cresques*" (Barcelona, March 9, 1392). Perhaps on this occasion the Jewish philosopher and Paulus Burgensis met at the royal court. See below, n. 42. ←

17. Baer I, nos. 442–446. The ban on weapons can be found in Duran, *Discursos*, p. 19. There is reason to assume that contemporaneous with this ban was the decree mentioned by Profet Duran in his epistle "Be Not Like Thy Forefathers," wherein he writes that "a declaration was made prohibiting women and children under fifteen years of age from wandering about the streets." See further below in the chapter dealing with Profet Duran. ←

18. On conditions in Castile after the disturbances, see Baer II, no. 249, *et seq.* On Jews associated with the court at this time, see *ibid.*, no. 269. Concerning Henry III see also R. Carande, *Anuario de historia del derecho español*, 11 (Madrid, 1925), 318 ff. ←

19. On the Jews of Navarre at this time, see Baer I, no. 600 *et seq.* *Archivo general de Navarra, Catalogo* vol. XVIII ff. ←

20. For the basic decrees effecting the rehabilitation of the Barcelona aljama, see CDIA, VI, pp. 436, 438 ff., and Kayserling, *MGWJ*, XV (1866). On R. Hasdai Crescas' authorization, see Baer I, no. 453. On his invitation to Barcelona in November, 1394, see *ibid.*, p. 713. On the intervention of the lion-keeper's son, see A. Rubio y Lluch, *Documents*, vol. II, no. 353. On the final dissolution of the Jewish community of Barcelona, see F. Carreras i Candi, *La Ciutat de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1913), pp. 496 ff., and Baer I, no. 462. Concerning the community of Valencia, see *ibid.*, p. 714, the latter part of no. 453. ←

21. On the events in Majorca, see Piferrer-Quadrado, *Islas Baleares*,

pp. 232 ff., and Baer I, no. 461. Considerable material on the exiles from Majorca can be found in the later responsa of R. Isaac b. Sheshet (nos. 1–187) and in the Responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach Duran. R. Moses Gabbai is mentioned several times. Bernstein (nos. 49–51) published the poems written by Solomon de Piera (see n. 30). Compare Baer I, no. 457. Villanueva, vol. 21, p. 246, writes of the *auto-de-fé* of a *converso* in Majorca in 1407, one of the few incidents I know of in this period. The *converso*, who was cited twice, attempted to return to Judaism after having done penance and been accepted back into the Catholic fold. The governor of the island initially interceded on the condemned man's behalf, but eventually washed his hands of the matter. ⇐

22. On Gerona, see Baer I, no. 447. On Tarragona: *ibid.*, no. 455. See also the articles by José Sánchez Real in *Boletín Arqueológico*, Tarragona, XLIX (1949), and *Sefarad*, XI (1951). On Cervera: Durán, *Dis-cursos*, pp. 20, 55. On Fraga: Salarullana, *RABM*, XXXX, 199 ff. Among those who fled were a number of prominent personages, such as Joseph Gatenyo and Hayyim Rimoch. One of the deserters was a dyer (*tintorer*) by profession. See also the Hebrew letters published in Baer I, nos. 440, 441. On Lerida, see Baer I, nos. 472, 480. ⇐

23. Baer I, nos. 451, 456, 464, 465, 474, 476. ⇐

24. Baer I, no. 462 and pp. 998–1001. ⇐

25. Baer I, no. 463. ⇐

26. Baer I, no. 467. On the internal conflicts which persisted in the Saragossa aljama even at this late date, see, for instance, Serrano, *Orígenes*, Appendix V. ⇐

27. Baer I, no. 441. ⇐

28. See Segura, *Jochs Florals* (Barcelona, 1885), pp. 270 ff. ⇐

29. Baer I, no. 449. ⇐

30. I cite below passages from the poems and letters of Solomon de Piera and Solomon Bonafed, disregarding certain textual fine points which are the task of a complete critical edition. Some of the material was copied by me many years ago; there are other passages which I have recently had the opportunity to compare with photographs in the Schocken Library in Jerusalem. Only a portion of the poems has thus far been published. On Solomon de Piera and his circle, see the well-known article by M. Steinschneider, *Hamazkir*, XIV–XVII (1874–1877); see also H. Brody, *Beiträge zu Salomo da Pieras Leben* (Berlin, 1893), and S. Bernstein, *The Divan of Solomon de Piera*, Part I, (New York, 1942). In his foreword, Bernstein deals with the personalities of de Piera and his friends (see also his articles in *Tarbiz*, VII and VIII, and *Horev*, III); I find it difficult to agree with him in several particulars. Generally speaking, my purpose here is merely to elicit some of the traits which are important for an understanding of de Piera's generation. See also H. Schirman, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain and Provence*, vol. II, pp. 564 ff. ⇐

31. *The Poems of Solomon de Piera*, Berlin ms. 114, pp. 4ff. ⇐

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 37 ff., and other mss. See Simon Bernstein, "An Encomium of Solomon de Piera in Honor of the Castilian Rabbi, R. Meir Alguadex," *Sinai*, anniversary volume (Jerusalem, 1958), pp. 205–219. ⇐

33. Berlin ms., p. 28 ff. ⇐

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 203 ff.; Oxford ms., 1984, pp. 235b ff. ⇐

35. Berlin ms., p. 179. ←

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 51 ff. ←

37. *Hechalutz*, VII, pp. 96 ff.; *Otzar Nechmad*, II, p. 230; concerning R. Zerahia, see ch. XI, n. 4. ←

38. Regarding Solomon Halevi and Joshua Halorki, see Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. VIII, pp. 79 ff. L. Landau, *Das apologetische Schreiben des Josua Lorki*, etc. (1906); Francisco Cantera, *La conversión del célebre talmudista Salomon Levi (Pablo de Burgos)* (Santander, 1933); P. Luciano Serrano (Abad de Silos), *Los conversos Pablo de Santa Maria y Alfonso de Cartagena* (Madrid, 1942). Cantera, "Alvar Garcia de Santa Maria . . ." (see above, n. 2). I shall here briefly clear up several details from the life of Paulus Burgensis. Responsa nos. 187–192 of RIBaSh, which were written approximately between 1380 and 1385, were sent to "the scholar Don Solomon Halevi, may his Rock and Redeemer preserve him, the son of the honorable Don Çag Halevi" (no. 191). On the Halevi family of Burgos, and on Don Çag el Levi in particular, see Baer II, nos. 169, 189, 197. In the Archivo general de la Corona de Aragon, Reg. 1867 f. 20 is a letter sent on the 15th of July, 1387, from King John of Aragon to the king of Castile, touching on the subject of debts owed to certain members of his household, to wit, Meir and Samuel Halevi of Burgos, at the time residents of Saragossa, the sons of Açach el Levi *el mayor quondam*, Jew of Burgos. On the wedding which brought Solomon Halevi to Saragossa (RIBaSh, responsum no. 240), see also Baer I, p. 486. Solomon Halevi's Purim-day letter has been published several times, most recently by Abrahams in *JQR* (O.S.) XII (1900), 255 ff. According to this latter version, the writer of the letter was "in Inglaterra with הרמניש" (?). According to the text published by Neubauer, *Isr. Letterbode*, vol. X (1884/85), pp. 81 ff., Solomon Halevi was writing from London. It is my guess that the text used by Neubauer was emended by a later copyist. Abrahams supposes that Solomon Halevi was brought to England as a prisoner-of-war. This theory, however, is based upon a misinterpretation of Halevi's use of the word "prisoner," which is not meant to be taken literally. I think it probable that the word "Inglaterra" refers to the English territories in the south of France, and that the word הרמניש is a mistranscription of דוקישה (*duquesa*), which would be duquesa doña Constanza de Lancaster, a relative of King John of Castile. Early in 1389 she was together with the king in Burgos, and from there she journeyed to Bayonne (Bayona de Inglaterra), in order to meet her husband, the Duke of Lancaster (Ayala, ch. I for 1388, ch. II for 1389; *BAE*, LXVIII, pp. 118, 123). Their negotiations came to an end in the summer of 1389 with the signing of an armistice between England on the one hand, and France and her ally, Castile, on the other. Cantera, in "Alvar Garcia . . .", p. 292 f., and *idem*, *Homenaje a Millás Vallicrosa*, I (1954), 301 ff., suggests that in Solomon Halevi's letter the words עם הרמניש should be read as "arrehenes," that is to say, that Halevi and a number of other Castilians were sent as pledges to England, in accord with the terms of a treaty between the two countries signed in August, 1388. But it is difficult to accept his explanation, for Cantera—like others before him—does not notice the ironical over-tones in the words of Solomon Halevi: "and where the king's prisoners are kept, there have

I been thrust into the pit.” Likewise, Cantera errs in his translation of the letter, misunderstanding the metaphorical style of Solomon Halevi. According to Cristobal de Sanctotis, Solomon Halevi was baptized on the 21st of July, 1390; but from Joshua Halorki’s letter we gather that the conversion took place only after the outbreak of the disturbances. There is good reason to agree with Graetz here, who places more reliance on Halorki’s testimony than Cristobal’s biography, which was written long after the event. The discrepancy, however, cannot be construed as intentional, inasmuch as other authors also believed the great riots to have taken place in 1390 rather than 1391. L. Serrano, *Fuentes para la historia de Castilla*, II (Burgos, 1907), p. lxxxiii, perhaps throws some interesting light on the role played by Garci Alonso, *canonicus de Covarrubias*, in Solomon Halevi’s conversion. This Garci Alonso belonged to a family of wealthy merchants from Burgos, who were engaged in the wool-trade and in export to Flanders. See also Serrano, “Los conversos . . .,” pp. 18–19. But all this is pure hypothesis. Cantera (“Alvar Garcia,” p. 304) claims in opposition to my theory that we know no exact date for the pogroms in Burgos before the 21st of July, 1391. But from all we know, the pogroms spread quickly through all Castile during June and July, 1391, and came to their end during this short time. In any case, there is no denying the fact that the conversion of Solomon Halevi took place close to the time of the great persecution, as did the conversions of Juan Sánchez de Seville and Juan Sánchez de Calatayud. These conversions were a sign of the approaching destruction.

We learn about the relation of the new Paulus to the Jews, his former brethren, in the first years of his conversion, from the letter of Profet Duran; it is difficult to invalidate his words, as Cantera tries to do in his book (p. 307). Joshua Halorki’s letter and Solomon Halevi’s reply will be dealt with below, using Landau’s edition. Although I depart from his text in certain minor instances, there is no need to discuss the matter here in detail. See also the first edition of Eleazar Ashkenazi, *Divre Hakhamim* (Metz, 1849), pp. 41 ff., and Geiger, *Otzar Nehmad* (Vienna, 1857), II, pp. 5 ff. =

39. Paris ms., p. 85b. The passage can be found in the book *De coelo*, of Aristotle, ed. Academia Regia Borussica (Berlin, 1831), vol. I, p. 268. = 40. Modern scholarship (Geiger in *Otzar Nehmad*, II, pp. 5ff., and in his *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte* [Breslau, 1910], p. 479; and Graetz, vol. VIII, p. 86) has been mistaken, I believe, in its interpretation of the answer of Solomon Halevi (Paulus de Sancta Maria). Other historians have not even attempted to understand this difficult letter. = 41. Regarding Profet Duran, see the introduction and appendices to Friedländer and Kohn’s edition of the *Sefer Ma’aseh Ephod*; also, A. Poznanski’s edition of *Kelimath ha-Goyim*, published in *Hatsofeh Me’eretz Hagar*, vols. 3–4, and Baer I, p. 799, and the last portion of Duran’s letter to R. Joseph b. Abraham Isaac Halevi in the appendix to the *Ma’aseh Ephod*, p. 191. On Bonet Bonjorn, see Baer I, p. 259, the note to no. 190. On the book *Zikhron Hashmadot*, see Graetz, vol. VIII, note I, and my *Untersuchungen über Quellen und Komposition des Schebet Jehuda* (Berlin, 1923), eh. I. In his criticism of Christianity, Profet was preceded by Marsilius de Padua in his book

Defensor pads (see the edition by R. Scholz, *Monumenta, Germaniae Historica*). Marsilius' writings rest upon a much broader base. Under a different guise, the same arguments appear in the works of the great English reformer, John Wycliffe. During the period of the Church schism no less than earlier times, the Jews freely borrowed polemical material from the debate which took place within the Christian camp. I do not know through what channels Christian arguments came into Jewish hands, but generally speaking there can be no doubt that in the period under discussion more than ever, the Jews of Spain kept touch with contemporary Christian theology. A reference to this contact is to be found in the article by M. Grabmann, *Das Defensorium Ecclesiae des Mag. Adam, eine Streitschrift gegen Marsilius von Padua u. W. v. Ockham*, A. Brackmann-Festschrift (1931), p. 569. The author of the book in question wrote (in Perpignan?) during the pontificate of Pope Urban VI (1378–1389). To help substantiate his argument he read the Book of Kings in the Hebrew original together with four Hebrew commentaries, and by his own admission was assisted in his studies by a Jewish scholar who read the books with him daily over a period of approximately two years. Arguments similar to those in *Kelimath ha-Goyim* can be found in R. Simon b. Zemach Duran's book *Kesheth u-Magen* ("The Bow and the Shield"), but the two authors differ in details, and it is possible that they were partially making use of the same sources. At any rate, such arguments were common at the time. Some of Profet Duran's historical criticism in *Kelimath ha-Goyim* had already been advanced by him in the epistle "Be Not Like Thy Fathers." My citations from this epistle are based on the manuscript of the critical edition prepared by A. Poznanski, which is in the National Library in Jerusalem. All New Testament references are footnoted there. The epistle is treated with insight by Graetz (*Geschichte*, VIII, [1864] 949 ff.). See also A. Geiger, *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte*. 2nd ed., pp. 482–486, where a full translation into German is given. ←

42. "I, too, my brother, know as well as you of his great accomplishments in spherical astronomy, to say nothing of his discoveries and mighty hypotheses in regard to the epicycles, the movement of the poles and the circumference of the earth, or of his discourses in the other sciences." See P. Duhem, *Le système du monde*, II (1954), pp. 146 ff. On the meeting with R. Hasdai Crescas, see above, n. 16. ←

43. *Ma'aseh Ephod*, pp. 191 ff. R. Abraham b. Isaac of Gerona was among the scholars who were asked by the king in 1373 to give an opinion on the purity of the family of Isaac Castellon. See Baer I, no. 309, p. 450. On his son Joseph, see above, n. 8, and Baer I, p. 628. ←

44. On the flight of *conversos* from Barcelona, see *Manuel de novells ardots*, p. 29; for that of Isaac Nifoci, see the Responsa of R. Simon b. Zemach, vol. I, no. 21; also, above, ch. IX, n. 13. An example of emigration from Castile to Palestine is given in an article by Jeanne Vieillard, *Anal. Sacra Tarrac.*, XII (1936), *Homenatge a A. Rubio*, vol. II, p. 270. Letters of recommendation for R. Judah b. Baqa and other emigrants to Eretz Israel and those affected by the persecutions have been published by Brody, *Beiträge zu Salomon da Pieras Leben*, pp. 16 ff., and by H. Beinart, "Igron Ivri mi-Sefarad min haMeah ha-XV," *Sefunot*, VII (1961), 75–134. It is worth mentioning here a rather late

document which I did not get to see in the original royal records, but which is recorded in F. Torres Amat's book, *Diccionario crit. de los escritores catalanes* (Barcelona, 1836), p. 338. It contains a memorandum sent on February 17th, 1412 from Queen Maria to the bailiff of Palamos; the queen informs the bailiff that several "New Christians" are preparing to ship five crates filled with Jewish books to overseas lands, and asks that this be prevented. =

45. Maestre Juan el Viejo de Toledo's book in the National Library in Madrid, ms. no. 9369 (Bb 128). For further information on Maestre Juan, see Nic. Antonio, *Bibl. hisp. vetus* II, 209. Maestre Juan's book was written in 1416. The author mentions the sermons of Brother Vincent (Ferrer) in Toledo (1412) and the disputation held under the auspices of Pope Benedict XIII (i.e., the disputation at Tortosa). Messianic reckonings for the year 1391 are cited in the above-mentioned manuscript (fol. 17b) in the name of Rabi Çag Abendino. There is reason to assume that this is the same man as Azach Avendino, a resident of Belchite who, according to the *Libro verde de Aragon*, was the father-in-law of Alazar Golluf. See Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 502 ff.; also Baer I, p. 610 ff., no. 390, from which we learn of the close contact between this person and R. Hasdai Crescas. A younger man bearing the name of Açach Avendino, also a Jew from Belchite, is mentioned by Serrano, *ibid.*, p. 153, n. 1, and p. 187, n. 4. =

46. This letter has been published by A. Jellinek, *Bet Hamidrash*, VI, pp. 141 ff. See also: Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, IV, p. 133; *Hamagid* (1878), p. 178; Graetz, *MGWJ*, XXVIII (1879), p. 79; Steinschneider, *Die Geschichtsliteratur der Juden* (Frankfurt am Main, 1905), par. 63. Parts of the letter are obscure. The story of the death of the Spanish king and his family fits neither the king of Castile nor the king of Aragon. The place name signified by the verse "And a shoot shall come forth . . ." (Isa. 11.1) is obscure. Joshua Halorki, in his address at the disputation of Tortosa (quoted by Graetz) enumerates the twenty-four attributes of the Messiah which, according to him, were present in Jesus; the second attribute predicates that the Messiah be born in Bethlehem, contrary to Jewish doctrine which holds that he can be born anywhere: *Rabi namque Aquiba quendam in civitate Biter et tempore Rabi Moysi de Egipto alium in Terra Teman, tempore vero nostro Rabi Hazday Crescas quendam in Cisneros regni Castelle in sinagogis publice predicans natos messiam quemlibet istorum firmiter asserebant*. See ms. Vat. 4069 f. 8^v, 28^v, Pacios López, *Disputa de Tortosa*, II, pp. 23, 387. (See chapter XI, n. 4.) =

47. Baer I, no. 456a. =

48. *Or Adonai*, III, 8, 2. =

49. Enrique de Villena's testimony in his book on eye-healing through incantation in *Tratado del aojamiento*, published by J. Soler, *Revue Hispanique*, XLI, (1917), 110 ff. Cf. E. Cotarelo y Mori, *Don Enrique de Villena* (Madrid, 1896), which also deals with Enrique's treatise. Enrique, who wrote his book about 1423, mentions several charms to be used in curing eye maladies by means of amulets which he had heard ascribed to R. Moses b. Nachman, R. Hanoch, R. Asher of Toledo, R. Isaac Israeli, or else received orally from Maestre Hasdai Crescas "who lived in these our times" (Soler, p. 191), and from "R. Zerahia, called en Ferrer, who lived in these our times" (*ibid.*, p. 193).

("R. Zerahia" is R. Zerahia Halevi, the chief Jewish speaker at Tortosa.) Concerning Enrique de Villena, see also Millás, *Estudios hist. de la ciencia española*, p. 399. R. Joseph Ya'abetz' testimony in his book *Or ha-Hayyim* ("The Light of Life"), ch. XII, has been cited by Graetz, vol. VIII, note 2. The tradition of bringing down rain by means of prayers, practiced by pious men like Hasdai Crescas, is also mentioned by R. Abraham Saba in his book *Tzeror ha-Mor*, portion "Behukothai" (ed. Venice), f. 109^v. Cf. Graetz, *loc. cit.* See also what is written in the book *'Avodath ha-Kodesh* by R. Meir ibn Gabai, part 2, ch. 16 (near the end). Such a tradition concerning Hasdai Crescas gains further real value in view of stories circulating about the success of Vincent Ferrer in bringing rain in September, 1413 by his preachings and prayers: J. E. Martínez Ferrando, *S. Vicente Ferrer y la casa real de Aragón* (Barcelona, 1955), doc. no. 37. On a cabalistic prayer which R. Hasdai used to recite, see A. Marx, *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research*, IV (1932-33), p. 155. On Hasdai's petition to be allowed to take a second wife, see Baer I, no. 452. Of his conciseness, his disciple said: "For our Rabbi, may he rest in peace, was wont to speak and write with wondrous brevity." See Ph. Bloch, *Die Willensfreiheit von Chasdai Kreskas* (München, 1879), p. 42. ←

50. Regarding *Or Adonai*, see H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Harvard University Press, 1929); J. J. Guttmann, *The Philosophy of Judaism* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1951), pp. 215 ff. and in particular, pp. 218 ff.; Millás, "Estudios," p. 427. In my article "Abner of Burgos' *Minhat Kna'ot* and its influence on Hasdai Crescas," *Tarbiz*, XI (1940), I dealt with the problem of freedom of will in the *Or Adonai*, II, 5. A similar, if somewhat more tenuous, resemblance to Abner's ideas in the *Or Adonai* can be found in the discussion of teleology (*Or Adonai*, II, 6). For a complete summary of Abner's philosophy, see above, vol. I, pp. 327 ff. See also Solomon Pines, *Scholastic Studies after Thomas Aquinas and the Philosophy of Hasdai Crescas and His Predecessors* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1965). ←

51. Concerning Vincent Ferrer, see Fâges, *Histoire de Saint Vincent Ferrer* (Paris, 1894). S. Brettler, *San Vicente Ferrer u. sein literarischer Nachlass* (Münster, 1924). (For an evaluation of this famous Christian preacher, see also: J. Huizinga, *Herbst des Mittelalters* [1930], pp. 7, 275 ff.) R. Chabás, "Estudio sobre los sermones valencianos de San Vicente Ferrer," *RABM*, VIII (1903), 124 ff. (cf. Mitrani-Samarian, *REJ*, LIV, 242 ff.). Millás, "San Vicente Ferrer y el antisemitismo," *Seferad*, X, (1950). J. Sanchis Rivera, *Quaresma de Sant Vicent Ferrer predicada a Valencia l'any 1413* (Barcelona, 1927). J. E. Martínez Ferrando, *San Vicente Ferrer y la casa real de Aragón* (Barcelona, 1955). The sermon which Vincent Ferrer gave in Valencia during the persecutions of 1391 (published by Chabás, as mentioned above) is absolutely against violence toward the Jews; they must be brought nearer to the Christian faith through preaching and teaching, but in the meanwhile they should be separated from the Christians so as to prevent any contact or influence. But the large volume of sermons given by the Dominican preacher in Valencia in 1413 (edition San chis Sivera) leads to another conclusion. These sermons (powerful as they are, they show no signs of an inner knowledge of Judaism) are mainly based on the stories of the Gospel, recounting the disputes of Jesus

with the Pharisees and his Passion. The Jews were forced to attend these sermons, garbed in their distinct dress according to law, and so they stood side by side with the excited Christian crowd. All historical testimony affirms the enthusiastic manner of the speeches of the great preacher. Those sermons were of course accompanied by anti-Jewish excitement. We must also add to this evidence the documents from the years 1412–1415 which shed light on Vincent Ferrer's behavior toward the Jews—these will be given later on. From all these sources there emerges a portrait of a fanatical zealot, which is not so different from the descriptions to be found in Usque, and later Graetz. ←

52. Baer II, nos. 275, 276–285; Cantera, "Alvar Garcia," p. 238. ←

53. *Ibid.* ←

54. Baer I, nos. 483, 485. On Vincent Ferrer's activity in Valencia in April of 1413, see Sanchis Sivera, p. xxii. New material on Vincent Ferrer's activity and on the conversion of Jews in Aragon, particularly at the time of the Tortosa dispute, can be found in the following articles: Francisca Vendrell, "Aportaciones documentales para el estudio de la familia Caballeria"; "Concesión de nobleza á un Converso"; "La política proselitista del rey D. Fernando I de Aragón"; "La actividad proselitista de S. Vicente Ferrer durante el reinado de Fernando I de Aragón," *Sefarad*, III (1943); VIII (1948); X (1950); XIII (1953); J. E. Martínez Femando, *San Vicente Ferrer y la casa real de Aragón* (1955). ←

NOTES TO CHAPTER XI

1. Francisca Vendrell, *Se farad*, XIII, pp. 90, 97, doc. 1. See Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, IV (1879), pp. 50 ff.; Steinschneider, *Hebr. Übersetzungen* (Berlin, 1893), p. 762; *Hamazkir*, XV, p. 83. ←

2. Baer I, no. 481. ←

3. See P. Galindo Romeo, *La biblioteca de Benedicto XIII* (Universiada, Saragossa, 1929), pp. 670 f., 809. ←

4. On R. Zerachia Halevi, see *REJ*, XVI (1888), p. 34; *Hamazkir*, XII, 42; Steinschneider, *Hebr. Übers.*, p. 328; RIBaSh, responsum no. 314; Baer I, no. 459; above, ch. X, n. 49. On his sermon, see ch. X, n. 37. Apparently, certain responsa credited to R. Solomon ibn Adret—part V, nos. 166–168—belong in fact to R. Zerachia. On R. Mattityahu Hayitzhari, see S. Buber's introduction to the *Midrash Tehilim*, p. 108. On R. Moses aben Abez, see above, ch. IX, n. 17. Regarding the other scholars, see the continuation in the text. The main and most important source for the Tortosa dispute are the Latin protocols, which have been retained in Vatican manuscript 4069 (a photostatic copy in my possession), in another manuscript in Escorial, and in parts of a third manuscript in Gerona. See Pacios López, I, pp. 31 f. The Vatican manuscript was used by F. Ehrle in the appendix to his book *Martin de Alpartils, Chronica actitatorum temporibus Benedicti XIII* (Paderborn, 1906), and by A. Poznanski, *REJ*, 74–76 (1922–23), as well as by myself in an article published in *Spanische Forschungen der Goeresgesellschaft, Gesammelte Aufsätze*, III (1931). I have used the Vatican ms. as a basis for the treatment in the present book. In the meantime there has appeared *La Disputa de Tortosa* by Antonio Pacios López, M B.C.,

vol. I: *Estudio historico-critico doctrinal*; vol. II: *Actas* (Madrid-Barcelona, 1957). The second volume of this book is a complete edition of the acts of the Tortosa disputation, according to the Vatican and Escorial manuscripts, together with the fragments of the Gerona manuscript. All the three manuscripts, dating from the fifteenth century, are probably based on one archetype. After closely examining some details of both manuscripts, I came to the conclusion that the Vatican, and not the Escorial manuscript is the better of the two. Pacios López's manner of editing may be somewhat misleading on this point. However, the issue is of minor importance, because the differences between the two versions are mostly without material importance. As a matter of fact, we possess only one protocol, and the apostolical notary can be considered the cause of its defects. In Pacio López's first volume (P.L. = Pacios López) which he has written in a typical Catholic-apologetical vein, he attempts to argue in detail against the conclusions offered in the Hebrew edition of my book. There is nothing in what he states to alter my views. This applies especially to the problem of the forged midrashim (see vol. I, p. 411, n. 54). For further proof, I have added some quotations from the protocols.

There exist two Hebrew fragments dealing with the opening days of the disputation: the first, by Bonastruc Desmaestre of Gerona, was characteristically reworked by Solomon ibn Verga in his book *Shebet Yehudah*, no. 40; the second, which is anonymous, has been published by Halberstam in *Jeshurun*, VI. See my *Untersuchungen über Quellen u. Komposition des Schebet Jehuda* (Berlin, 1923), pp. 38 ff. The material in R. Isaac Abravanel's book *Yeshuoth Meshiho* has little relevance here. See also my article, "The Forged Midrashim of Raymond Martini and Their Role in Medieval Religious Polemic" (Hebrew), *Klein-Gulak Memorial Volume* (Jerusalem, 1942), pp. 28–49. ←

5. My reconstruction of the opening arguments is based on a detailed analysis of the three extant sources whose presentation, due to its complex nature, would not seem to belong in a book of this scope. As for the arguments that follow, whenever my version of them is based purely on the Latin manuscript, and there is no particular reason to cite them in the original, I shall refrain from footnoting. ←

6. Vat. fol. 11b, P.L., II, 35: *Tunc vero magna quasi cum furia Rabi Jucef Albo sic inquit: Posito messiam mihi probari iam venisse, non putarem deterior esse iudeus*. Vat. fol. 12, P.L., II, 36: *subsequenter Rabi Jucef Albo prorupit in hec verba. Shebet Yehudah*, p. 74: "R. Joseph Albo jumped up and said." ←

7. The Latin protocol. Vat. fol. 12^b and P.L., II, 40: *quod iudei non ad finem eorum salvandi animas, sed dumtaxat ad bona temporalia et ad prosperitatem corporum consequenda expectabant messiam . . . , nam eorum anime, eciam si nunquam veniret messias, salve fierent*. ←

8. This incident is mentioned by Hieronymus in his speech of December 22, 1413 (protocol, Vat. fol. 133, and P.L., II, 401; *Spanische Forschungen*, p. 312, n. 11.):

Subsequenter per interrogacionem unicuique vestrum sigillatim mediante prestito iuramento super rotulo legis factam plures ex vestris deposuerunt atque asserentes dixerunt, quod cum rabini concesserant messiam natum esse, quod hoc non dixerint condicionaliter nec aliquam posuerunt condicionem, ymo absolute concesserant, quod

quidem patet per publicum instrumentum, et insuper prefati singulares dixerunt ex virtute dicti iuramenti, quod unus ex robinis, cum ulud concessisset, hoc modo causavit dicens, quod necessarium erat, quod tunc nasceretur messias; nam cum homo est in angustia infirmitatis, tunc opus est, ut veniat medicus. Ulterius concesserunt, quod alius rabinus in suo libro, quem legit ibidem in publico, quod dicta auctoritas innuebat quod prefatus judeus arator assumpserat offidum venditoris calligarum puerorum, et quod ivit cum eis in Bethleem, ut matrem messie in noticiam haberet. Hoc enim totum supra in processu prehditum est, de quibus sunt scripture auctentice et publice.

Similarly, Hieronymus in his speech of May 19, 1413 (Vat. fol. 60^v, and P.L., II, 185):

Preterea in hoc sacro consistorio publicum est et notorium maiores vestrorum, ex viribus radonum et auctoritatum contra eos per me allegatarum, fuisse convictos, adeo quod publice, ultra duobus mille personis ibidem interessentibus, confiteri habuerunt, nulla (nonnulla, Vat.) adiecta condicione, tempore destructionis templi Messiam fuisse natum atque monstratum. Quod constat per scripturam fidedignorum atque notabilium hominum ibidem presencialiter circumstancium, die sdbbati undecima februarii. Super qua quidem confessione interrogati quod, postquam tunc temporis natus fuerat, ubi a die illo citra steterat, nonnullis quidem de vestris dicentibus ipsum esse Rome et in paradiso, in tantum quod sanctissimus Dominus noster Papa tunc dixit verum rabinos prefatos dicere atque dixisse Messiam Rome seu in paradiso esse, Rome quidem per auctoritatem, in paradiso per essenciam. Adhuc eciam rabi Mathatia tunc dicente fore necessarium tempore illo Messiam natum fuisse, quoniam tunc temporis fuit maior angustia in et super Israel; nam cum infirmus periculo subiacet, tunc opus est medico.

Post hec vero, diabolica ducti temptatione in errorem ac cecitatem cordium, iudei pertinaces, quidquid superius debite ac congrue confessi fuistis, impudenter negastis.

The whole matter serves to throw light on the tactics of the Christians and on the psychology of the weaker characters among the Jews. Rabbinical scholars like R. Zerachia Halevi, Mattityahu Hayitzhari and R. Joseph Albo could only say that the aggadoth of the Talmud are open to different interpretations, and if it is stated according to legend that the Messiah has been born on the day of the destruction of the Temple, even then he has not revealed himself yet in public, and the redemption of Israel did not begin on the day of the destruction of the Temple. Professor Pacios López, vol I, pp. 58 ff. of his book, polemizes against what I have written; he simply does not understand what the argument is about. =

9. Vat. fol. 13^v, P. L., II, 45 (and see my article on the forged midrashim, p. 30 ff.):

Et quamdam auctoritatem de Beressit, id est, Genesis magno, ubi dicitur:

“Quadraginta annis ante templi destructionem iudices consistoriales gazit, potestate in criminibus eis sublata, remotos fuisse.”

Et refert rabi Rahamon quod tunc temporis septuaginta iudices vocati Çanhedrin, una cum maioribus Israel, barbis depilatis ac

saccis induti dixere: "Heu nos, quoniam nunc ablatum est ceptrum de Iuda, et filius David nondum venit."

Qua ex auctoritate magister leronimus Messiam venisse illumque Iesum Christum esse, cum tempore illo, quadraginta scilicet annis ante prefatam destructionem, passio Domini nostri Iesu Christi fuerit, clarissime demonstravit.

Tunc rabi Astruch respondit prefatas auctoritates, Messiam venisse probantes, apud Iudeos autenticas non haberi . . .

Vat. fol. 14, P. L., II, 47:

Ad que omnia dictus rabi silentium pro responsione accepit; hoc tamen adiecto, quod, cum dictus rabi quoddam folium super quadam auctoritate de secundo templo superius allegata et per dictum rabi negata, scriptam in propriis manibus custodiret, discretus vir magister leronimus, ut probaret suum propositum eiusque adversarii falsitatem, dicti rabi inconsiderantis caute arripuit scripturam, qua ibidem publice lecta, apparuit contrarium eius quod dictus rabi Astruch asserebat.

Vat. fol. 14, P. L., II, 49:

Die vero Mercurii, quintadecima dicti mensis, prefatus magister leronimus proposuit dicens:

Messiam venisse, per illam prophetiam "non auferetur ceptrum de Iuda, etc." die lune proximo lapsa, valde diffuse probatum fuisse; verum quamdam auctoritatem rabi Rahamon, in libro Genesis magni rabi Moysi Darsan scriptam, cum prefata concordantem, in publicum adduxit, quam iudei negavere dicentes nullibi suis in codicibus eam posse reperiri.

Deinde dominus noster Papa mandavit ut super huius auctoritatis probatione, usquequo prefatum librum Genesis magni ad manus haberet et in publicum deduci faceret, supersederetur; tunc per dictam auctoritatem, non obstante quod absque illo per dictos iudeos Messiam venisse publice fuerit concessum, hoc ipsum clarius probaretur.

Iudeus quidem Gerundensis, Bonastruch Desmaestre nomine, respondens dixit, quod si contingeret auctoritatem prefatam alicubi reperiri, tunc ad eam iudei respondere conarentur, credens minime posse reperiri, cum alias auctoritates, que nullibi reperiri poterant, dictus magister leronimus allegasset.

Tunc dictus magister leronimus contra dictum iudeum respondit: si hanc vel aliquam dictarum auctoritatum allegatarum non reperiri contingat, hoc noveritis duobus a capitibus pervenisse, cum propter vestrorum iudeorum in non perscrutando notoriam negligenciam, tum etiam propter libros non habere allegatos; habete [imperativus!] igitur libros, quoniam quidquid per me allegatum, dictum, seu allegandum et dicendum super materia preiacenti fuerit, modo quo dixi seu dicturus sum, me offero ad litteram in conspectu omnium, si necesse fuerit, probaturum, addiciens quod si quid super prefata auctoritate dicere, glosare seu alias allegare ipsi iudei intendebant, ut cum prefata, auctoritas esset reperta, non amplius super eadem altercetur, et illud statim exprimeret, diceret, seu allegaret.

Ex parte vero dicti Bonastruch fuit responsum nichil super hoc, donec prefata auctoritas reperta esset, iudeos esse dicturos. ⇐

10. On March 22, 1413, Hieronymus brought forward, together with two authentic midrashim, two others which, as the Jews claimed, were not

to be found in their sources (Vat. fol. 33^v-34; P. L., II, 105-106). The first is the "midrash" which was printed in the *Pugio fidei*, p. 350, and in the *Bereshit Rabati*, Albeck edition, p. 131, with which I dealt in my article on "The Forged Midrashim," p. 32; and the second is a shortened midrash bearing the name of Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani (like the preceding one), the subject and meaning of which I do not know. The Jews in Tortosa reacted to both of them in the meeting of March 31, 1413 (Vat. fol. 36; P.L., II, 112-113).

Preterea ad 5.^{am} et 6.^{am} auctoritates, ubi inquit prefatus magister Ieronimus, quod sunt in Genesi magno antiqua, inquit iudeus similes quidem auctoritates, et quamvis satis eas in suis codicibus perquisisset diligenter, minime reperisse. Ideoque dicit quod eis fidem aliquam non tenetur adhibere, et per consequens nec ad eas respondere; verumtamen cum dicto iudeo in auctenticis libris fuerint edocte, ut melius poterit, eis respondebit.

Hieronymus, April 3, 1413; Vat. fol. 39, P.L., II, 121:

9.^{us} vero punctus est duas auctoritates ultimas, quintam videlicet et sextam, negare dicentes: iudeus dicit quot ipse nullibi suis in codicibus eas reperit, etc. Contra hoc enim dico hanc responionem, salvo honore, esse valde irrationabilem, cum quia una dictarum auctori-tatum in conspectu tocius Curie romane fuit lectq, rabi qui legebat eam suis in manibus librum habente, nunc quidem eam negavit, de quo non est admiracione dignum, cum alias nonnulla, hic in publico per eos concessa, sine verecundie rubore ea successive negaverunt ibidem; tum quoniam prefate auctoritates, et si libri eciam oculis eorum non sint presentes, non ideo debent per eosdem iudeos negari, postquam sigillatim cum suis omnibus circumstanciis, tarn libri et capituli quam doctoris eas ponentu allegantur eisdem; quosquidem libros seu codices in aliam Cesaraugustana et alibi est notorium iudeos habere ad plenum; et quia non sunt manualiter presentes, non ideo iudeus debet ad eas cessare respondere. =

11. quod de mugitibus bovm nec de auguribus nulla debet mencio fieri nec fides prestari in eis. Vat. fol. 35^v. =

12. Vat. fol. 52^v, P.L., II, 161 (May 17, 1413):

Ad quod iudeus, nonnullas auctoritates per prefatum magistrum leronimum allegatas fuisse, quas iudeus in eius codicibus, quos habet, nullatenus vidit; nonnullas vero quas in quibusdam libris erratis, viciatis seu cancellatis, prefatus magister leronimus ad literam edocuit, de quibusquidem libris iudei quamplures, per modum quem ipsi iudei fatentur, monstraverunt et iuxta sequentes lecciones patebat libros, quos prefatus magister leronimus ostendebat, fore viciatos, seu propter vicium scriptoris illo passu erratos, non autem quod dicti iudei aliquid negarent veritatis, ut per rationes superius habitas potest lacius patere. =

13. et ideo expectant Iudei regem messiam, ut edificet Jerusalem inferiorem, ut illa mediante melius possint gloriam divinam attingere que vocatur Jerusalem superior, non obstante quod nunc, exutentes in captivitate, sint digni premio maiori, cum serviant Deo in angustia et fortuna, et plus valet et magis est regraciandum modicum servicium, quod quis facit in captivitate existens, quam multum in prosperitate. Verumtamen cum toto hoc expectamus ab hac fortuna captivitatis liberari cum potestate Deo serviendi, et servicio completo et cum

- gaudio, non autem modo quo ei servimus de presenti, cum non possumus ei servire, dato quod velimus.* Vat. fol. 94^v. P.L., II, 289. ⇐
14. Vat, 110^v–111, P.L., II, 339–341. “The Forged Midrashim,” p. 37. The assertion that through suffering the Messiah and the righteous “atone for the whole world, or for a whole nation or country,” together with the argument drawn from Ezekiel, chapter 4, and the Messianic interpretation of chapters 52 and 53 in Isaiah occur in Joseph Albo’s *Ikkarim*, IV, 13. Ezekiel ch. 4 was first adduced to support the doctrine of vicarious atonement by R. Abahu, Sanhedrin 39a. ⇐
15. Vat. fol. 119 f., P. L., II, 363 f. ⇐
16. Vat. fol. 123–124 and P. L., II, 374–376. ⇐
17. Baer I, nos. 482–488. Vendrell, *Sefarad*, XIII, 91. Martínez Ferrando, *S. Vicente Ferrer*, Doc. 34. ⇐
18. Vat. fol. 134^v–136. P. L., II, 408ff. I published a section of the Latin original of this speech in *Spanische Forschungen*, pp. 330–332. ⇐
19. Vat. fol. 164; P. L., II, 497. ⇐
20. Vat, 165^v–166; P. L., II, 502. *Spanische Forschungen*, p. 317, n. 18. ⇐
21. Vat. 143^v, f. P. L. II, 439 f. *Spanische Forschungen*, p. 333. ⇐
22. What follows has been published in the original by Ehrle, p. 591. ⇐
23. Vat. fol. 147 ff., P. L., II, 443 f. ⇐
24. Vat. fol. 155^v–158, P. L., II, 473–480. (February 23, 1414.) ⇐
25. Vat. fol. 172, P. L., II, 519. *Spanische Forschungen*, pp. 334–336. ⇐
26. I published part of this interesting statement in *Spanische Forschungen*, p. 324, n. 32. Halorki misrepresents R. Hasdai Crescas’ actual position. R. Hasdai did not use the term *ikkarim* (*articuli*), and he included the doctrine of the Messiah among the “true beliefs in which we, believers in God’s Torah, believe, and the impugner of which is called a heretic.” ⇐
27. Baer I, nos. 489, 497. ⇐
28. Ehrle, pp. 599 ff., lists the various cases of conversion as they are recorded in the Latin protocol. See also P. L., I, 63 ff. ⇐
29. See Baer I, no. 492, and p. xii; the articles of Francisca Vendrell (above, chapter X, n. 54). Concerning the conversion of Bonafos (Fernando) and Vidal (Gonzalo) de la Cavalleria, see especially the interesting documents in Francisca Vendrell, *Sefarad*, III, 137 f., 142 f., nos. II, Vf. Conclusive evidence of Solomon de Piera’s apostasy is to be found in the verses “*Lenogney hazman*” (“To the Time’s Musicians”) etc., which I published. See Baer I, pp. 797–798, To my regret, neither Bernstein nor S. Samuel [MGWJ, 81 [1937], p. 490] have succeeded in proving the contrary. They did not take notice of this poem, which forms the basis of my proof. See also H. Schirman, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain and Provence*, II, p. 566. ⇐
30. This poem has been published by Kaminka, *Mimizra#h Umima‘arav* (From East and West) I, 2 (Vienna, 1895), p. 114, and by H. Brody, *Miv#har Hashirah ha’Ivrit* (A Selection of Hebrew Poetry) (Leipzig, 1923), p. 329. ⇐
31. Baer I, p. 797. ⇐
32. See Kaminka, *Ha#hoker*, II, p. 23; Baer I, p. 198; S. Bernstein, *Tarbiz*, V (1934), p. 364. Cf. Raymond Martini’s *Pugio fidei*, p. 363. ⇐
33. Kaminka, *Mimizrah*, p. 115. ⇐
34. The poem has been published by Kaminka, *Hatsofeh*, XII, pp. 40 ff. ⇐

35. See my comments, Baer I, pp. 808 ff. My citations from Rimoch's letter and Bonafed's answer are based on the critical edition of A. Poznanski, the ms. in the National Library in Jerusalem. ⇐
36. *Hatsofeh*, XII, pp. 40 ff. ⇐
37. Protocol, Vat. fol. 187; P. L., II, 561 ff. ⇐
38. Vat. fol. 189; P. L., II, 566. ⇐
39. Vat. fol. 191^v; P. L., II, 574. ⇐
40. Baer I, no. 495. ⇐
41. Vat. fol. 189^v; P. L., II, 567. ⇐
42. Vat. fol. 192; P. L., II, 574. According to Villanueva (vol. 14, p. 31), Andreas Bertrandi was a converted Jew. See also *ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 31. ⇐
43. Vat. fol. 192^v; P. L., II, 575. R. Abraham b. E., David's remark is in his book, *Ba'a'ley Hanefesh Sha'ar Hakedushah*; see also "*Haga*" *hoth Maymonioth, Issurey biah*" in *ibid.* Magister Solomon Ysach was mentioned previously, February 10, 1413, Vat. fol. 12^v, P. L., II, 40–41. ⇐
44. Vat. fol. 192^v; P. L., II, 577–578. ⇐
45. Vat. fol. 198; P. L., II, 592. ⇐
46. Baer I, no. 506. ⇐
47. *Ibid.*, no. 513. P. L., II, 597 ff. A. H. N. Toledo *Cat. leg.* 1958 (Perg.) ⇐
48. Baer I, nos. 483, 491, 494, 495. ⇐
49. *Ibid.*, no. 496. ⇐
50. *Ibid.*, nos. 492, 500. ⇐
51. *Ibid.*, I, nos. 491, 498, 509. Martínez Ferrando, *Vic. Ferrer*, doc. no. 42 ff. ⇐
52. Baer I, no. 503. See also the interesting documents from 1415 having to do with the synagogue and *judería* in Gerona, published by M. de los Angeles Masia, *Sefarad*, XIII (1953), pp. 287–308; Francisca Vendrell, "Entorno a la confirmación real, en Aragon, de la pragmática de Benedicto XIII," *Sefarad*, XX (1960). Millás-Batlle, "Inventaris de llibres de jueus gironins," *Bulleti de la Biblioteca de Catalunya*, VIII (1934). ⇐
53. Cf. *Se fer ha'Ikkarim*, ed. and tr. by Isaac Husik (JPS, 1929–1933). See also J. Guttmann's discussion of the sources of the *Sefer ha'Ikkarim* in *Studies in Memory of A. Gulak and S. Klein* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1942). Any number of sections of the book show evidence of the polemics between Judaism and Christianity, especially the influence of Thomas Aquinas, and echoes of the disputation with Abner of Burgos (see Book III, ch. 13 and the following, and in Book IV, ch. 42). Albo himself erred in some quotations and interpretations of talmudic statements. See the Justified criticism of R. Jacob Habib, *En Ja'acob*, "Megillah," pp. 2–3, and of Meir aben Gabbai, *Avodath ha-Kodesh*, II, 33. My citations below are from *Sefer ha'Ikkarim*, I, 24, IV, 46–50. ⇐
54. The *Sefer ha-Emunoth* of R. Shemtob (Ferrara, 1556). Foreword, and *sha'ar* IV, ch. II, *sha'ar* VII, chs. 5–6. See also *Sefer Kebod Elohim* of R. Joseph ibn Shem Tob (Ferrara, 1556), fols. 3, 22, 28. Concerning the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, see G. Scholem, *Ursprung u. Anfänge der Kabbala* (Berlin, 1962), pp. 155 ff., 166 ff. ⇐
55. The *Iggereth M'usar* of R. Solomon Alami, published by Jellinek (Vienna, 1872), pp. 22 ff. (see my *Untersuchungen* on the *Shebet*

Yehudah, p. 27); Habermann edition (Jerusalem, 1946), pp. 29, 31, 39, 40, 44, 46. =

NOTES TO CHAPTER XII

1. Baer I, nos. 517–521, 523–531, particularly nos. 527 and 531. =

2. On this trial, see Kayserling, *Die Juden in Navarra, etc. und auf den Balearen* (Berlin, 1861). A. Durán, *Referencias doc. del call de juheus de Cervera* (Barcelona, 1924) (see Baer I, p. 1086). See also Baer I, p. 1085 on Gerona. =

3. Baer I, p. 862. =

4. On the number of Jews in Castile and Aragon at the time of the Expulsion, see below, ch. XV, n. 13. For Seville, cf. the modest figures which can be adduced from Baer II, no. 291. For Toledo, see *ibid.*, no. 390; for Burgos, nos. 294, 356, and p. 408. In the case of Guadalajara, certain revealing details are to be gotten from nos. 391 and 420, but our information is insufficient for any exact statistical appraisal. For Hita and Buitrago, see nos. 385, 386. In Segovia, a political center for the Jews as well as an important capital, a list prepared in 1460 shows twenty-nine independent Jewish householders—*BAH*, IX (1886), 351 ff. In Cuellar, a small town in the province of Segovia, the Jewish population was reported to have increased, as a result of the mayor's special efforts, from fifty to two hundred, shortly before the Expulsion (Baer II, no. 422). On Talavera de la Reina, see vol. I, p. 202; 424, n. 16. Approximately fifty Jewish families lived in Plasencia (Baer II, no. 324). In Haro there were forty-eight Jewish taxpayers (*ibid.*, no. 313). It was planned to increase the Jewish community of Alfaro to seventy homes (*ibid.*, no. 320). On the relative size of the several communities, the tax registers (*ibid.*, no. 350 in particular), if used with caution, can yield information. In a number of instances mention is made of the poverty of the aljamas, and of the need to reduce their taxes. =

5. See Baer I, no. 523, and the poems of Solomon Bonafed published by H. Schirman, *Ha-Shira ha-Ivrit*, II, pp. 620–639. The learning of “the scholar B. Joseph Yeshuah, may he rest in peace,” was favorably remarked upon by R. Isaac Abohab in his *Nahar Pishon* (Zolkiev, 1806), fol. 16b. A communal enactment in Saragossa in 1464 extended certain economic privileges having to do with wine producing to Rabbi Jucef ben Jesua—Serrano, *Orígenes*, p. 24. =

6. See Baer II, no. 313. =

7. See Baer II, nos. 286, 292 ff., 307 ff. Concerning R. Joseph ibn Shemtob, see Baer II, p. 320, n. 1. A. de la Torre y L. Suarez Fernandez, *Documentos ref. a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reinado de los Reyes Catolicos*, I (1958) : “rabi Yuce, procurador e enbaxador” (del principe Don Enrique [Henry IV]). See also L. Suarez Fernandez, *Relaciones entre Portugal y Castilla en la época del Infante Don Enrique (el Navegante), 1393–1460* (Madrid, 1960), p. 66. Steinschneider, *Gesammelte Schriften* (1925), p. 144 ff. Jacob Guttman, *MGWJ*, LVII. On the murder of the tax collector Don Gaon of Vitoria, see Kayserling, *op. cit.*, p. 122. =

8. The record of the inquisitorial trial of Diego de Aíva (Baer II, no. 422) reveals intimate particulars of Jewish life and Jewish-Christian relations in Cuellar, but I have been unable to cite these here in detail. For R. Moses Arragel's translation of the Bible, see *Biblia traducida del Hebreo al Castellano por Rabi Mose Arragel de Guadalfajara y publ. por el Duque de Berwick y Alba* (Madrid, 1920–1922). Particulars from the correspondence have been published by A. Paz y Melia, *Homenaje á Menéndez y Pelayo* (Madrid, 1899), II, 5 f., and S. Berger, *Romania*, XXVIII (1899), 521 f.; cf. *REJ*, XXXVIII (1899), 310. My own information comes partly from R. Moses' commentaries. These commentaries contain several items of interest in regard to the religious and intellectual history of fifteenth-century Spanish Jewry, and the book is well worth a separate monograph. An example of the illuminations in this precious manuscript can be found in A. Neuman, *The Jews in Spain*, vol. I, frontispiece (Philadelphia, 1944), and in Schirman, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain and the Provence* (Hebrew), vol. II, pp. 640–641. We should make mention here of the Castilian translation of Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed*, which was done at this time, and which still exists in manuscript in the National Library in Madrid. It has been written about by Mario Schiff, in *La bibliothèque du Marquis de Santillana*, pp. 428 f. This translation, which apparently originated in *converso* circles, was done at the beginning of the fifteenth century (it was finished in Seville in 1432); at a later date still, however, in the fifteenth century, an anonymous reader added notes and critical glosses. See also D. Kaufmann, *Arch. f. Gesch. d. Philosophie* (1898). The translation seems to have been read by *el bachiller* Alfonso de la Torre, the author of the book *Visión delectable*, etc. See my articles on "Shebet Yehudah" in *Tarbiz*, VI (1935), p. 153, and the literature there cited. The Castilian translation of Judah Halevi's *Sefer Hakuzari* which is in manuscript in the National Library in Madrid (ms. no. 17812) issued, apparently, from the same milieu; it, too, accrued anonymous notes and glosses. See J. M. Millás, *Sefarad*, XIII (1943), 300–319. ←

9. On the *Sefer Magen va-Romach*, see Graetz, VIII, p. 423, and D. Kaufmann, *Beth Talmud*, II (1892). I myself made use of manuscripts belonging to the Rabbinical Seminary of Breslau and to the National Library in Jerusalem. ←

10. *'Aqedat Yitzhak, sha'ar*, VI. On R. Isaac 'Arama as a preacher, see I. Bettan, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XII–XIII (1937–38). See also Sarah Heller-Wilenski, *Rabi Yitzhak Arama u'Muhnato* (Jerusalem-Tel-Aviv, 1957). ←

11. See, for instance, *'Aqedat Yitzhak, sha'ar*, XXVII and XLIV. In a similar fashion, R. Joseph Ya'abetz frequently quarreled with those intellectuals who set up the *Ethics* of Aristotle as an authority vis-à-vis the requirements of tradition. ←

12. *Ibid.*, *sha'ar* XLIV and XLVI. ←

13. See *Hazut Qashah, sha'ar* XII, and *'Aqedat Yitzhak, sha'ar* XXII and XXVIII. Similar attacks on heretics, Jews and *conversos* were made by the Christian, Alfonso de Espina (below, n. 28). All these critics cite identical talmudic passages which were used by the partisans of astrology to lend rabbinical backing to their beliefs. ←

14. *Hazuth Qashah, sha'ar* VIII. ←

15. *Hazut Qashah, sha'ar XII*. ⇐
16. On Don Abraham Bienveniste, see the index to Baer II, especially p. 305, n. 1; also, *Shebet Yehudah*, Wiener ed., pp. 27, 118 (see also the edition of A. Shochet); Graetz, vol. VIII, Note 4; Toledano, *N er ha-Ma'arav*, pp. 58 ff.; R. Hayyim ibn Musa's *Magen va-Romach*, ms. in the National Library in Jerusalem, p. 240. For the *takkanoth* of 1432, see Baer II, no. 287. ⇐
17. Regarding R. Joseph ibn Shemtob and R. Isaac Canpanton, see Baer II, no. 305. See also above, n. 7. On Maestre Shemaya, see *ibid.*, no. 307; on R. Jacob aben Nuñez, no. 323. Considerable information on Abraham Seneor will be given in this and the following chapter. ⇐
18. Baer I, no. 533. Serrano, *Orígenes*, p. 186. ⇐
19. See Segura, *Jochs florals* (Barcelona, 1885), p. 267; E. U. Girbal, *Revista de Gerona*, V (1881), pp. 104 f. ⇐
20. Supporting evidence for this description of the *conversos* can be found below in my discussions of polemical literature and the records of the Inquisition. ⇐
21. See *El Cancionero de Juan Alfonso de Baena* (Madrid, 1851), nos. 140–142. R. Foulché-Delbosc, *Cancionero castellano del siglo XV* (Madrid, 1915), II, 384 f., nos. 702–704. ⇐
22. See Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 189 ff.; also, the testimony given before the Inquisition, Baer II, p. 463. The book *Zelus Christi* etc., even makes mention of the *Zohar*; see Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, p. 401. See also G. Scholem's article in *Essays Presented to Leo Baeck* (London, 1954), p. 179. ⇐
23. See Baer II, no. 302, and the literature there cited. *Cronica del Halconero de Juan II*, ed. Juan de Mata Carriazo (Madrid, 1946), pp. 510 f., 518 f., 520 f., 537 f. See also, Alonso de Cartagena, *Defensorium unitatis christianae*, ed. P. Manuel Alonso (Madrid, 1943). This book was written some time after 1449; a defense of the “new Christians” undertaken in the name of the Christian religion, it exhibits conscious pride in the Jewish origins of the *conversos*. In the appendices to the book, its scholarly editor has printed several documents having to do with the events and writings of 1449, one of which is the work of Fernan Diaz de Toledo, “el relator,” the secretary of King John II. There is now no longer reason to doubt the Jewish origins of this and other officials of the Castilian crown whom, in the index to Baer II, I had listed as “old Christians.” See also, ch. XIV, n. 4, below. An edition has recently appeared of Juan de Torquemada's *Tractatus contra Madianitas et Ismaelitas* (ed. N. López Martínez—V. Proaño Gil [Burgos, 1957]); this book also deals with the problem of the *conversos* in a manner analogous to that of Alonso de Cartagena. Francisco Marquez Villanueva, “Conversos y cargos concejiles en el siglo XV,” *RABM*, LXIII (1957), 303 f. ⇐
24. A critical edition of this document has been published and annotated by H. Pflaum, *REJ*, LXXXVI (1928). See also N. López Martínez. *Los judaizantes castellanos y la Inquisición en tiempo de Isabel la Católica* (Burgos, 1954), pp. 383–387. For similar parodies, see E. Benito Ruano, “El memorial contra los conversos del bachiller Marcos García de Mora (Marquillos de Mazarambroz),” *Sefarad*, XVII (1957), 314 ff. ⇐
25. Baer II, nos. 304, 308. Beltrán de Heredia, *Sefarad*, XXI, 22 ff. ⇐

26. See R. Menéndez Pidal, *Crónicas generales de España* (1918), p. 159; *El rey Rodrigo en la literatura* (Madrid, 1925), p. 64. ⇐
27. See A. de Palencia, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, tr. A. Paz y Melia, vol. I, pp. 93 ff., and *passim*. Palencia's account of Diego Arias' beginnings should not be accepted uncritically. See M. Serrano, *Orígenes*, p. 265 (an author whose attitude towards the *conversos* is not exactly friendly !). ⇐
28. I use the 1485 Nuremberg edition of the *Fortalitium Fidei*. The polemic against heretics is in book two (*Liber II*) of this work. The material cited in the text is taken mainly from chapter six (*Consideratio VI*) of book two. In this chapter, under the subheading *Haeresis I*, Alfonso de Espina deals with *converso* circumcisions. Concerning Maestre Francisco, a *converso* resident of Medina del Campo who returned to Judaism, see the documentary evidence in Baer II, p. 428. The heretical criticism of the Gospel narratives comes under discussion in *Fortalitium Fidei*, *Haeresis II*. For the denial of the belief in immortality, see *ibid.*, *Haeresis XIII*, and, for the belief in astrology, *Haeresis XIV*. The believers in astrology sought support in the story of R. Eleazar ben Pedath (Ta'anith, 25a), and the use of this story by heretics is also mentioned by R. Abraham Bivach and R. Isaac 'Arama (see above, n. 13). Chapters X, XI, and XII of the *Fortalitium Fidei* are devoted to a discussion of inquisitorial procedure and actual questions. ⇐
29. Blood libels comprise part of the contents of *Liber III*, *Consideratio VII*, *De crudelitibus Judaeorum*. For the incident which took place near Valladolid, see *ibid.*, XI, and for the one in France, *ibid.*, IV. The story about Don Meir Alguadex appears at the back of the book. Various scholars, Kayserling (*Sephardim* [1859], p. 53) being the first, have disproved this false allegation. Cf. Baer II, p. 293. ⇐
30. The stories of expulsions appear in *Liber III*, *Consideratio IX*, *De Judaeorum expulsionibus*. The third of the stories deals with the expulsion from England. As far back as 1640, the great English scholar Selden (*De jure naturali et gentium* [ed. 1665], 188 ff.) challenged this fabrication. The stories of Usque and Joseph Hacothen, which have recently been alluded to by C. Roth (*History of the Jews in England* [Oxford, 1941], pp. 86, 132, 274), are based upon Espina's tales and have no historical value independent of them. ⇐
31. See *Historia de la orden de San Jeronimo por Fr. José de Sigüenza*, pub. Juan Catalina García, I, 363 f.; and Diego Enriquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, p. 53 (BAE LXX, 130). ⇐
32. *Ma'aynay ha-Yeshu'ah* (1860), fol. 57, *ma'ayan XII*, 6. See my article, "The Messianic Movement in Spain During the Period of the Expulsion" (Hebrew), *Zion*, V (1933), pp. 75 ff. Relevant inquisitorial documents will be cited below. For the rest the reader is asked to refer to the sources cited in my article above. ⇐
33. Baer II, no. 392. Regarding the description of the Messiah given here, cf. the account in the *Book of Zerubbabel*, where he is portrayed as appearing in Rome in the guise of "a man despised and wounded, oppressed and sorrowful," but as revealing himself to the worthy as "a handsome and comely young lad." See the different versions of this story published by Judah Ibn-Shmuel (Kaufmann) in *Midreshey Geulah* (Tel Aviv, 1943), pp. 73, 363, 380, 386. ⇐

34. Baer II, no. 410. I shall deal here below (pp. 384 ff.) with the trial itself. Concerning Abraham Bivach and his philosophical works (commentaries and translations), see Steinschneider, *MGWJ*, XXXII (1883), and *Hebräische Übersetzungen*, par. 38; *Encyclopedia Judaica*, IV, 479 ff. ⇐

The book "The Way of Faith" has not to this day received worthy scientific treatment, and those few remarks which have been published show neither understanding nor even thorough reading. It is well known that in *ma'amar II*, *sha'ar* 3, fol. 46^v of the book there appears a translation (slightly corrupt—perhaps deliberately) of Eusebius' book *Praeparatio evangelica* IX., 9. It appears that the Jewish philosopher had read some parts and chapters of the Christian *Praeparatio*. Through his reading in this book, the author arrived at the conclusion that the so-called "Greek Wisdom," whose study was forbidden according to the talmudic sages, did not concern philosophical research, for that is "a human wisdom, not a Greek one"; the talmudic ban concerns Greek theology, that is, "the knowledge of their rites and feasts, the sacrifices rendered their gods and the worship of idols that was customary then"; also, the ban concerned the art of rhetoric. Cf. *The Way of Faith*, II, 3, fol. 46–47. The ban on "Greek knowledge" concerns mainly "Greek theology," in the meaning mentioned above, which is forbidden "like the Christian theology whose study is forbidden." Even these sentences have not been understood correctly until now; cf. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Übersetzungen*, p. 90, n. 314: "*Christliche Theologie ist für Bibago . . . gleich der verbotenen griechischen Wissenschaft!*" ⇐

The fact that R. Abraham Bivach read the *Praeparatio evangelica* interests us for several reasons. Of course he knew only the Latin version; the book had been translated by Georgios of Trapezunt, the translator dedicated the translation to Pope Nicholas V who died in 1455, and the book was printed in Venice in 1470 (see K. Mras in his edition of the *Praeparatio evangelica*, 1954, *Einleitung*, pp. xxviii–xxx). R. Abraham Bivach died in Saragossa several years before the inquisitional trial, whose first signs were apparent in 1484 (see Baer II, pp. 490–491 and chapter XIV, n. 67). The exact date of his death is unknown. In all likelihood, he had been close to the Humanistic Enlightenment of his age. The main part of his book is dedicated to arguments about the essence of faith and subjects related to it. His theological system in this respect should be the subject of a separate study. Here I will let the subject rest with a remark on the second *ma'amar*, *sha'ar* 7, fol. 67^v, concerning the "definition of faith," where he brings in two definitions which appear to be based upon statements by Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II, ii, quaest. 4, art. I, but the Christian philosopher defers there the second "definitio" as being an explanation of the first "definitio" only, which has already been given in "To the Hebrews," ch. xi. The sermon concerning Hovav, the son of Re'u'el, is based on material from R. Moses b. Nachman's commentary on the Torah, Num. 10.29–33 and Ex., ch. 18. But R. Abraham Bivach treats this material in an original way for his system and practical purpose. ⇐

35. Baer II, no. 399, the trial of Juan de Pineda. See further below. ⇐

NOTES TO CHAPTER XIII

1. See A. González Palencia—J. Hurtado y Jiménez de la Serna, *Historia de la literatura española*, pars. 142, 143; also, the bibliography cited there. ←

2. See Foulché-Delbosc, *Cancionero*, II, pp. 588 f., no. 967. ←

3. *Cancionero de Hernando del Castillo* (1882), II, pp. 234 f., 246; *Cancionero General*, ed. 1520, fol. 194v, 196, 199. On Maestre Shemaya, see above, ch. XII, n. 17. On the Inquisitor Doctor Franco, see the index to Baer II. The allusions to inquisitional activities apply only to the conditions that came into existence at the time of Torquemada. I find it difficult, however, to fathom these matters, which lie, properly speaking, in the province of students of Castilian poetry, and these have failed to deal with the above passages. My only purpose is to call attention to certain well-known figures. In the Foulché-Delbosc anthology, *Cancionero*, pars. 386–389, 394, there are additional satirical allusions to the Judaism of Juan Poeta. The reader who is interested in further information on these poets should consult the histories of Spanish poetry. ←

4. Baer II, no. 318. ←

5. See A. de Palencia, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, tr. Paz y Melia, I, 533 ff. ←

6. On the events of 1467, see the literature cited in Baer II, no. 321. The two Spanish accounts, one belonging to Palencia and the other anonymous, complement each other, although they do diverge on certain points. There is no need to discuss it here in detail. What is important is that Palencia overlooks the specifically Jewish and religious aspects of the matter, e.g., the burial of *conversos* in the Jewish cemetery and the discovery of Hebrew books in their homes. The riots of 1467 are mentioned in inquisitional documents as the *robo de la Madalena*. See Baer II, pp. 445, 510, nos. 412, 413, 414. In the note to no. 413, I referred to records of the trial of “the hanged one (*el que ahorcaron*), Fernando de la Torre.” I am uncertain as to whether this Fernando is to be identified with the famous man who was hanged in 1467, or with the man killed in 1485 (see below). On the events which took place after the battle near Olmedo, see Diego de Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, ed. J. de Mata Carriazo (Madrid, 1941), ch. 38 (BAE, 70, 44), and Palencia, vol. II, pp. 115, 144 ff. See also Henry IV’s decree of 1468 in Baer II, no. 321. ←

7. The background of the marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella is well known to students of Spanish history. The legendary story related by R. Elia Capsali has been published by Moses Lattes, *Sefer Devey Eliahu (Liqutim shonim mi . . .)* [Padua, 1869], pp. 60 ff.). The more authentic and detailed version of what happened is to be found in Palencia’s chronicle of Henry IV. On Pedro de la Cavalleria, see *ibid.*, II, p. 233, 243. The instructions for Pedro’s mission have been published in their entirety by Paz y Melia, *El cronista A. de Palencia*, p. 88. There is an account of the marriage itself in Palencia, vol. II, pp. 275–285. On Abraham Seneor, see Palencia, vol. III, pp. 183 ff., and Baer II, no. 322. On Alfonso de la Cavalleria, cf. Palencia’s detailed and inter-

esting evaluation of his political and judicial abilities, vol. III, pp. 278, 316, 320, 332, 334, 337. Documents concerning the diplomatic mission he undertook in 1475 are to be found in Paz y Melia, *op. cit.*, pp. 184, 194. In regard to his later activities and ultimate fate, see below. M. Serrano (*Orígenes*, p. 193) deals with Alfonso at length, but neglects to mention the material which I have related here. =

8. Palencia, *Crónica*, vol. III, pp. 107 ff. Neither Castillo, *Cron. de Enrique IV*, eh. 160, nor Valera, *Memorial*, ch. 83, relate anything not to be found in Palencia's report. Castillo lays particular stress on the Judaizing activities of the *conversos*, and attempts to defend Henry IV's failure to punish them. =

9. Palencia, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 115. =

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 123 ff. A slightly different version of the matter is to be found in Castillo, *op. cit.*, ch. 164. =

11. Palencia, *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 129 ff., 229 ff., and vol. IV, pp. 267 ff. =

12. I unfortunately do not have in my possession Cotarelo's edition of the *Cancionero de A. Montoro*, and have had to depend on Pidal's introduction to the *Cancionero de Baena*, p. xxxiv ff. See also Kayserling, *REJ*, XLIII (1901), 249 ff., and Mitrani-Samarian, *REJ*, LIV (1907), 236 ff. =

13. Baer II, pp. 470, 543, no. 426. Fita, *BAH*, XX (1892), 498. =

14. See especially Baer II, nos. 324, 332, 334, 341, 342, 356, 371. =

15. *Ibid.*, nos. 325, 329, 358, and the documents cited in the index to Baer II, pp. 589b-590a. =

16. Baer II, no. 329. =

17. On Abraham Seneor, see above, n. 7 (Baer II, no. 322) and the sources cited in the index to Baer II, p. 549. For the Hebrew letter of 1487, see *ibid.*, no. 360. Cf. the statement of H. H. Ben Sasson, in *Zion*, XXVI, 31 n. 36, "The writers of the letter changed the Scriptural verse (Ezra 7.26) : . . . whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment." The fact is that the *rab de la corte* or the Jewish community no longer had the power of capital punishment. See in general A. Marx, "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Two New Accounts," *JQR*, XX (1908), 240-271; "Additions and Corrections," *JQR*, N. S., II (1911), 257-258; reprinted in A. Marx, *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore* (New York, 1944), pp. 77-106. The negative critique of Don Abraham is contained in the anonymous account in Marx, *JQR*, XX, p. 250. Additional details will appear below. For R. Meir Melamed, see the index to Baer II, p. 563b, and the anonymous account mentioned above. The article of Marx includes, among other things, important information on the scholars of the Spanish *yeshivoth* during the period of the Expulsion. Mention should be made here of the fact that in the *Sefer Bet Yosef Al ha-Turim*, there is considerable material on this subject which has not yet been made use of. In the *Bet Yosef le-Orach Hayyim*, R. Joseph Caro cites on a number of occasions the doctrine of "our great rabbi and teacher, Rabbi Isaac Abohab, may he rest in peace." See *Ibid.*, 27: "And I have heard that they make this their custom on the basis of the explanation given by that great lion, Rabbi Isaac de Leon, may he rest in peace." Also *ibid.*, 32: "It is recorded by the scribe Rabbi Abraham Assan, may he rest in peace, that Rabbi Isaac de Leon, having obtained the agreement of his scholarly contemporaries, placed a ban on all the phylacter-

- ies in Spain that had been constructed after the manner of Rabbi Asher b. Yehiel." And more of the like. The passages in the *Bet Yosef* which deal with cabalistic teachings, and hence derive from the traditions of the Spanish exiles, are well known. See also below, n. 22, and in text. ←
18. Baer II, p. 348, n. 2. ←
19. *Ibid.*, p. 398. ←
20. See Marx, *JQR* (O.S.), XX, p. 251 and p. 262, n. 37, See also Baer II, pp. 348, 384, 517, 518. ←
21. On R. Judah ibn Verga, see Baer II, pp. 399, 423, and the Wiener edition of the *Shebet Yehudah*, pp. 1, 66, 67, 94. The *Shebet Yehudah* has recently been republished by E. Shochet (Jerusalem, 1947), with an introduction in which I summarize my views of the book. See also *Tarbiz*, VI, 152 f. On the subject of Judah ibn Verga's accomplishments in the field of astronomy, see Francisco Cantera Burgos in his "El Judío Salmantino Abraham Zacut," *Revista de la Academia de Ciencias de Madrid*, XXVIII. On R. Isaac de Leon, see Baer II, pp. 450, 453, 459. On R. Solomon ibn Verga's activity in the year 1487, see Baer II, no. 376. For further information on the other men mentioned in the text, see the index to Baer II. ←
22. In regard to R. Isaac Abravanel, see my article in *Tarbiz*, VIII (1937), 241 ff., and the Index to Baer II. Concerning his relations with Guadalajara and R. Isaac Abohab, see A. Marx, *JQR*, XX, 259, and *Jewish History and Booklore*, pp. 89 and 431-432. Marx points out a passage from the *Bet Yosef le-Orach Hayyim*, 168, which reads as follows: "And [R. Joseph Fasi] testified that in the *yeshivah* of Ma'or Galuth Ariel the Gaon R. Isaac Abohab, this question was put in the presence of a great assembly of scholars and scribes, among them R. Isaac Abravanel, may he be remembered in the world to come." The question under discussion (whether to recite the blessing over bread or the blessing over food in general [*bore mine mezonot*]) was, despite the fact that it was being debated in the very last year before the Expulsion and at the time of the La Guardia blood libel, far removed from any political considerations involving Gentile and Jew. On the *yeshiva* of R. I. Abohab in Guadalajara, see Marx, pp. 431-432; on R. Isaac Abravanel, see the English book by B. Netanyahu (Philadelphia, 1953). Concerning the Rashi Commentary on the Torah, which was printed in Guadalajara by Shelomo ben Alkabetz Halevi, on 6 Elul, 5236 (1476), see I. Sonne, "The Beginning of Hebrew Printing in Spain," *Kiryath-Sefer*, XIV (1937), 369 ff. ←
23. An unusual exception to this rule was the physician Solomon Biton, who was still in the queen's service in 1476 (Baer II, no. 331). But even this departure from the norm took place in the beginning of the period under discussion. ←
24. Regarding Alfonso de la Cavalleria, see above, n. 7. Regarding Gabriel Sánchez, Luis de Santangel, and other Aragonese converts who were closely associated with the royal court, see Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 65 ff., 152 ff. In the year 1479, Don Fernando was still promising his old father in a letter that he had no intention of turning over the administration of his kingdom to a *confeso* (*converso*), and that no man, not even Sanchez, was aware who the recipient of the office was to be! See A. Paz y Melia, *El cronista A. de Palencia* (Madrid, 1914), p. 309.
25. Regarding R. Abraham Zacuto, see Fr. Cantera Burgos, *Abraham*

Zacut (*Biblioteca de la Cultura Española* [Madrid, 1931]), and *El Judío Salmantino Abraham Zacut* (*op. cit.*, u. 21). For the Jewish attorney in Trujillo, see Baer II, no. 346. <

26. Baer II, no. 330. <

27. *Crónicas de Enrique IV*, vol. IV, pp. 249, 341 ff., 349 ff. This is Palencia's last reference to the plight of the *conversos*. In September, 1477, Palencia writes of his own activities for the last time, and thenceforth, until his death in 1492, no biographical information is available. It would seem that he later broke with the policies of the Catholic kings, after first supporting them. See A. Paz y Melia, *El cronista A. de Palencia*, p. xxv. The position taken by A. de Palencia is typical of a "conservative antisemitism." <

NOTES TO CHAPTER XIV

1. See A. Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, book I, ch. 29; *BAE*, LXX, 589 ff., 600; Baer II, no. 333. See also H. C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition in Spain* (1906-07), vol. I, pp. 154 ff. <

2. Baer II, no. 335. On the basis of my notes there it can be seen that the relocation of the Jews began even before the official proclamation of the law. That the initiative for this move came from ecclesiastical circles can be deduced from the events which took place in Aragon—see Baer I, no. 554. See also, in Girbal, pp. 51 ff., the edicts having to do with Gerona. As late as 1484 there were communities in Castile where the new law had not yet taken effect. See Baer II, no. 345. <

3. The inquisitors were: Maestre Miguel de Murillo, vicar of the Dominican Order, and *el bachiller* Juan de San Martín, head of the monastery of San Pablo in Burgos. <

4. Bernáldez, *op. cit.*, ch. 44, p. 600. This book is the principal source on which I have based my account. On the attempts to rebel, see also the records published by Fita, *España Hebrea*, I, pp. 184 ff., and pp. 71 ff.; also, the documents from Jerez, *ibid.*, p. 32 ff.; also, Lea, vol. I, pp. 160 ff. New light has been cast on the beginning of the Inquisition in Castile, and particularly in Seville, by the *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos por su secretario Fernando del Pulgar, Versión inédita*, edición y estudio por Juan de Mata Carriazo (1943), and by the important article of Fr. Cantera, "Fernando de Pulgar y los conversos," *Sefarad*, IV (1944), 295 ff. It is now firmly established that this famous chronicler was himself of Jewish stock, and that in his writings he defended the persecuted *conversos* and urged the lenient application of inquisitorial law and the winning over of the *conversos* by means of instruction and Christian love. Cantera, p. 308, cites *inter alia* the following gracious passage from Pulgar's letters: "To the extent that the old Christians are bad Christians, to that very extent are the new Christians good Jews. I would estimate that there are in Andalusia some ten thousand girls between ten and twenty years of age who have never from the day of their birth ventured from their homes, nor heard nor known of any doctrine other than that practiced at home by their parents. To bum them all would be extraordinarily cruel and a difficult thing to perform, inasmuch as in their despair they would flee to those

places where no punishment awaits them," etc. It would appear that Pulgar was related to Judaism not only by racial and social descent, but by matters of creed and faith as well. <

5. On the situation in Valencia, cf. the material published by B. Llorca, *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia* (1935), pp. 37 ff., esp. p. 48 ff. The king's letter to Santangel on the subject of one of the *conversos* (Gil Roiz) can be found in ACA, Reg. 3684 f. 1. See M. Serrano, p. 110. On the plans to assassinate the inquisitor in Valencia, see Baer II, no. 417, p. 512. The papal bulls and royal correspondences have been published by Fita, *España Hebrea*, I, pp. 83 ff., and by Lea, vol. I, pp. 587 ff. See also n. 32. <

6. Baer II, no. 337. On the course of events in Jerez de la Frontera, see the article by H. S. de Soprani in *Sefarad*, XI (1951), 363 ff. and the articles by this author on the Jews of Puerto de Santa María in *Sefarad*, XIII (1953), 309 ff., and in *Hispania*, XI (1951), 413 ff. <

7. On Torquemada's appointment, see Lea, I, p. 173. My evaluation of the inquisitional proceedings is based largely on the fundamental accounts given by the German scholar E. Schäfer, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des spanischen Protestantismus und der Inquisition im 16. Jahrhundert* (1902) and by the American historian Lea in his great book on the Spanish Inquisition, as well as, of course, on the research done by a number of excellent Catholic scholars on the medieval Inquisition as a whole. The documents which I have seen, however, have compelled me to dwell on certain details, the examination of which somewhat alters the accepted picture and discovers in the Inquisition several irrational aspects. Recently, a number of works have been written about the Inquisition in Spain. See especially: Bernardino Llorca, S.J., *La Inquisición en España* (Barcelona, 1936, second ed. 1946) (the appendix at the rear contains a bibliography of both the author's studies and of other works written on the subject); Miguel de la Pinta, O. S. A., *La Inquisición Española* (Madrid, 1948), and B. Llorca, *Bulario Pontificio de la Inquisición Española, Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae*, vol. XV (*Collectionis totius*, no. 48, Rome, 1949). Most of the documents in this book were previously made public by Fita. See also my article in the Appendix of this book: "The Inquisition of the Catholic Church and the Criminal Jurisdiction of the Jewish Communities." E. van der Vekené, *Bibliographie der Inquisition, Ein Versuch* (Hildesheim, 1963). <

8. See in general: *Catálogo de las causas contra la fé seguidas ante el tribunal de la Inquisición de Toledo* (Madrid, 1903). Court records of Ciudad Real trials have been published by Fita and R. Santa María in *BAH*, XX (1892), XXII (1893), XXIII (1893), and by L. Delgado Merchan, *Historia de Ciudad Real*, pp. 250 ff., 448 ff. See also Baer II, nos. 426, 427. Mention should also be made of the records of the trial of Juan de la Sierra, *Inq. Tol. leg.*, 184, no. 800, which, although it properly belongs to the period after the Expulsion, began in 1483, and in whose records fragments of prayers have been preserved. See also Lea, vol. I, p. 167, and Llorca, *Gregorianum*, XX (1939), pp. 111 ff., 526 ff. In the meanwhile, my friend and student, Haim Beinart, has written the dissertation: "Trials of Judaizers by the Toledan Inquisition" (Hebrew), Ph.D. dissertation (Jerusalem, 1956). See also Beinart's article "Those Sentenced by the Inquisitional Court in Toledo" (Hebrew), *Tarbiz*, XXVI (1957), 71 ff., and "Two Documents Concerning

Confiscated Converso Property," *Sefarad*, XVII (1957), 280 f., and the exhaustive book: *Anusim bedin ha-Inquisitzia* (Conversos on Trial by the Inquisition) (Tel Aviv, 1965). <

9. See Lea, vol. I, p. 171. <

10. Baer II, no. 395. <

11. *Ibid.*, no. 393. <

12. The prayer can be found in the records of the trial of Manuel Gonzalez, published by Fita, *BAH*, XXIII (1893), 313 ff. Compare this with the unusual prayer (of Mencía Suárez, beata, vecina de Ocaña) published in Baer II, no. 407. This prayer has been honored with a special note by G. Scholem in his article, "Schöpfung aus Nichts und Selbstverschränkung Gottes," *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, XXV (Zürich, 1957), 113. <

13. Baer II, p. 476. The trial of Fray Rodrigo de Orense is related in detail by Sigüenza, vol. II, pp. 21, 33. There is no reason to believe that he was of Jewish origin. See also H. Beinart, "The Judaizing Movement in the Order of San Jeronimo in Castile," *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, VII (1961), pp. 167-192. <

14. See Lea, pp. 166 ff. Lea believes that the transfer of the Inquisition to Toledo was delayed as a result of the Archbishop of Toledo's opposition. My own analysis of the course of events has led me to the assumption which I advance below in the text. In the records published by Fita, *BAH*, XI (1887), the external developments of the Inquisition can be clearly seen. See also Llorca, *Gregorianum*, pp. 510 ff. R. Altamira y Crevea, in his *Historia de España*, II (1913), 424, cites a pro-converso speech given by Gomez Manrique. This speech is taken from Pulgar's chronicle (IIc. 79, *BAE*, LXX, 333 ff.; ed. Carriazo, pp. 347 f.) and was written by Pulgar himself: See F. Cantera Burgos, *Sefarad*, IV (1944), 332. Manrique's antisemitism is evident from his poems. On the decree of excommunication which, according to the chronicler Pulgar, the Jews were forced to announce, see Lea, I, p. 168, Baer II, p. 450, 464, 478, 489, and the Jewish account in Marx, *JQR*, XX (1908), 252. <

15. See Baer II, nos. 348, 349. <

16. Baer II, no. 352. <

17. Baer II, no. 351. <

18. The account which follows is based on the records mentioned above in n. 14. <

19. See the records of the trials preserved in the *Catálogo* etc., n. 8, above. <

20. Selections from the records of these trials have been published by M. Serrano in his article "Noticias biograficas de Fernando de Rojas autor de la Celestina y del impresor Juan de Lucena," *RABM* (1902), 245 ff., and requoted by Mitrani-Samarian in an article in *REJ*, LIV (1907). The scholars who later had a hand in the development of Hebrew printing in Spain drew from the same source, and it is unnecessary here to go into the matter in detail, unfortunately, I did not manage to see the records of the trials themselves for it is likely that there is still material there whose significance has escaped the Spanish historians. On Martin de Lucena, see the Wiener edition of the *Shebet Yehudah*, p. 87, and my article in *Tarbiz*, VI (1935), 162. Shochet, pp. 9, 118, 205. <

21. Baer II, no. 399. <

22. See the trial of Juan de Rio, Baer II, no. 401; also, Lea's citations from this trial, vol. III, p. 7. ⇐
23. Baer II, no. 404. ⇐
24. Baer II, no. 412. ⇐
25. *Ibid.*, no. 414. ⇐
26. *Ibid.*, no. 396. ⇐
27. *Ibid.*, no. 418. ⇐
28. *Ibid.*, nos. 403, 405. ⇐
29. *Ibid.*, no. 394. The entire confession of Juan de Sevilla has been published by Nicolas López Martínez, *Los judaizantes castellanos y la inquisición en tiempo de Isabel la Católica* (Burgos, 1954), pp. 407-412. Cf. the other trials of artisans in Toledo that are cited in Baer II, no. 394, p. 477. Even a cursory glance at the catalogue of inquisitional trials in Toledo suffices to prove that great numbers of artisans were indeed sentenced to death there. ⇐
30. Baer II, no. 423. See also Lea, vol. I, p. 194. In an article which I published in *Zion*, V (1933), I cited particulars from these records. In regard to the prophecy of the maiden of Herrera and other similar occurrences, I should like to point out that the phenomenon of a Jewish girl receiving Messianic revelations is not necessarily a product of the influence of the Christian environment; in Bagdad, for example, in 1120, the daughter of a Jewish physician, having exposed herself to ascetic ordeals, was rewarded with a revelation of Elijah and a prophecy of redemption. See the article by S. D. Goitein, *JQR*, XLIII (1952), 57-76. Several of the particulars of the Messianic movement of 1500 that are described here are known to have been common features of all such movements beginning with the appearance of a false Messiah in Crete in the fifth century C. E., and continuing through the movement of Sabbatai Zevi. Also connected with the events of 1500 are the Messianic prophecies of R. Asher Lemle. ⇐
31. See Lea, vol. I, p. 238. According to Vicens (the full title of whose book is given below in n. 53), vol. I, p. 370, the Inquisition was transferred from Castile to Aragon for reasons having to do with the flight of the *conversos* in the same direction. A realistic appraisal of the course of events will not confirm this artificial theory. Even before the persecutions of the Inquisition began the greater part of Spain (including Aragon, Valencia and Catalonia) was heavily populated with *conversos*, and these *conversos* were living, for the most part, in the same areas where their Jewish forefathers had lived. ⇐
32. Passages from the records of this trial have been published by B. Llorca, *Anal. Sacra Tarraconensia*, XI (1935), pp. 47 ff. See also *Gregorianum*, XX, 514 ff. ⇐
33. Baer II, no. 417. The first charges against Esplugues were brought in 1482 in Jativa, in the same year and in the same city in which R. Joseph Alcastiel wrote his cabalistic responsa; see G. Scholem, *Tarbiz*, XXIV (1955), 167 ff., and below, ch. XV, n. 3. On the explanation of the Hebrew amulet, see Scholem, *ibid.*, p. 170, n. 17. The amulet was given to the wife of the accused by a Jewish doctor and resident of Jativa, who presented it in the name of Maestre Vidal. The nature of the amulet was the subject of evidence given before the Inquisition by a Jewish artisan and resident of Jativa, Maymon Zaimati. See also the responsum of R. Zemach, son of R. Solomon, son of R. Simon b.

Zemach, *Yakhin u'Voaz*, I, no. 125: "Sent to R. Solomon Zalmati in Jativa, may God preserve him, when I was in Majorca recuperating from my illness." This responsum was one of the many written by the scholars of this period to deal with the problem of the *anussim*. R. Zemach lived in Majorca for purposes of recuperation from 1465 to 1468: see *ibid.*, nos. 124–126. Apart from *conversos*, I am unaware of any Jews who were living in Majorca at this time, or who came there for reasons of health. R. Zemach's responsa nos. 14–19 in *Yakhin u'Voaz*, II, were sent "to the scholar R. Joseph, may God preserve him, the son of Jacob Zurafa, may his soul be in paradise, while he was still in Valencia," and from this we learn that at the time Jews were living in Jativa and even in Valencia. See *ibid.*, no. 14: "You asked for my opinion on whether, in a city whose gates are locked by night, it is permitted to transport [e.g., goods or possessions on the Sabbath], for I have seen in Valencia and Jativa Jews transporting throughout the city," etc. Concerning *conversos* in Valencia, see *ibid.*, no. 19: "You asked me, these were your words, about those *anussim* who make it their custom when getting married that, before going to the church, they bring two Jews to their home and in their presence hold the marriage ceremony and recite the blessing over the espoused couple, after which they go to church to be married by the priests. And now an incident has taken place in which one of these *anussim* women has left her husband and her son to whom she gave suck, escaping by way of the window, and has gone to a place where she now lives as a Jewess and protests that she means to marry a certain Jew who is repentant like her," etc. See the article by S. Asaf, "The *Anussim* of Spain and Portugal in Responsa Literature" (Hebrew), *Zion*, V (1933), 32.

The year 1482 signifies in any case the turning point in the activities of the Inquisition in Valencia towards *Gleichschaltung* (putting on an equal basis), with the new ways being tried out first in Andalusia. Proof for this is found in the letter sent to his senders by the messenger of Barcelona from the court at Medina del Campo, on March 13, 1482 (published by J. M. Madurell Marimón, *Hispania*, XVII [1957], 217 f; see J. Vicens i Vives, *Ferran II*, vol. I, 371), stating: Rumors have been circulating here about procedures and trials which took place and are taking place in Valencia against those called *conversos*, who are dealt with as bad Christians; there is regret that many are about to leave the town and spread throughout the world (*per Universum mundum*). These facts throw new light on the mystical responsum of R. Joseph Alcastiel to a question put to him in the town of Jativa, 1482, about the midrashic saying "that before God created the world, he had been creating worlds and destroying them." "And why have you not asked about the worlds which you see with your own eyes getting destroyed every day, that is, the bodies and souls of human beings?" (See *Tarbiz*, XXIV, p. 178.) =

34. Baer II, no. 419. =

35. See the article by Llorca, "Homenatge a A. Rubio i Lluch," vol. II (-*Anal. Sac. Tarrac.*, XII, 1936), p. 410. =

36. Baer II, no. 408. =

37. See Lea, vol. I, p. 243. =

38. Baer II, no. 419. =

39. See my note in the introduction to Baer II, p. xii. The undiscovered basis for this accusation would seem to be the custom of slaughtering a chicken or a ram on the eve of Yom Kippur as a symbolic gesture of atonement. See the *Otsar ha-Geonim*, VI (1934), p. 62. ←
40. All this is given in detail by Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 159 ff. ←
41. For the details of what follows below, see A. C. Floriano, *BAH*, LXXXVIII (1925), 173 ff. ←
42. See below, p. 382. ←
43. See Llorca, *Gregorianum*, p. 125. ←
44. This captain's name is mentioned several times by Floriano in connection with his military and political office. The same name re-occurs as that of a prosecution witness in Llorca, *Gregorianum*, p. 127. Serrano, *Orígenes*, p. 94, mentions the trial of a Brianda de Santangel, the wife of Juan Garcez de Marcilla, whose brother and sister were also sentenced in 1484. It is most unlikely that this should be a mere coincidence. ←
45. The records have been published by Llorca, *Gregorianum*, pp. 128 ff. ←
46. See the selections from the records of various trials in Baer II, no. 398. See also the passages from the records of the trial of Luis de Santangel, a resident of Teruel, Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 114 ff. Also, the trial of the old woman and resident of Teruel, Donosa Ruyz: Llorca, *Sefarad*, II (1942), 129 ff. ←
47. See Serrano, p. 162, n. 3. Concerning the murder of the inquisitor, cf. the story in Serrano (pp. 162 ff.), which is the most detailed and reliable account. ←
48. Passages from the records of Montesa's trial have been published by Serrano, pp. 162 ff. and 509 ff. See also Lea's table of inquisitional proceedings in Saragossa, vol. I, pp. 607–608. ←
49. These details are based on the above-mentioned list in Lea, pp. 596, 601, 603, 604, 606, 608–609. On Luis de Santangel, see Serrano, pp. 82 ff. On Francisco de Sancta Fé, see Lea, p. 275. *Libro Verde de Aragon*, ed. Isidro de las Cagigas, pp. 45 ff. ←
50. Reference is made to this in the records of Montesa's trial, Serrano, p. 165, and in the trial of S. de Paternoy, *ibid.*, pp. 516 ff.; cf. the author's view on p. 169, where he treats the entire story as doubtful. Serrano expresses an opinion only in regard to Gabriel Sánchez. The remarks on the king, queen, and *el prior de Santa Cruz, que es un satanista deciplo de antecristo*, were brought as evidence at Montesa's trial (Serrano, p. 513), and recur in the trial of Alfonso de la Cavalleria, Paris ms. *Bibl. National, fonds espagnols*, ms. 74, fol. 27. Similar evidence was brought forward in the trial of Juan de Pero Sanchez, *ibid.*, ms. 78, fol. 112. Alfonso's letter appears in ms. 75, fol. 6; cf. ms. 74, fol. 71. The testimony of the priest of Vich appears in ms. 75, fol. 48. Evidence of Gabriel Sánchez' Jewish connections, which was given at the trial of his brother, is in Paris ms. 78, fol. 226–227. ←
51. Cf. Baer II, no. 397, and the note on p. 466. (On p. 449, *ibid.*, at the beginning of the list of documents, "ms. 75" should be corrected to ms. 74.) The first of the witnesses for the prosecution, as will appear below, was R. Levi ben Shemtob who, in Baer II, p. 459, is reported to be living, at a later date (after the expulsion) as a Christian in

Portugal. R. Abraham ben Solomon Arduziel (Neubauer, p. 113) speaks slightly of the foremost heretic and freethinker “the accursed Laban the Aramean, Levi of the bad name *Shem ra*” (“a bad name,” a pun on *Shem tov* [Shemtob], a good name), “a sinner who had caused Israel to sin more than did Jeroboam, who advised the king [Manuel] to seize the synagogues and houses of study.” But these are insufficient grounds for assuming that this is the same man as the scholar R. Levi ben Shemtob, formerly a man of distinguished learning in the Jewish community of Saragossa (and by assuming so, we refute his own testimony which will appear below), inasmuch as many Jews of repute were forced to convert in Portugal, willingly or unwillingly. =

52. See J. A. Llorente, *Histoire de l’Inquisition d’Espagne*, tr. by A. Pellier, I (1817), p. 250. This historian, the first to make a critical study of the Inquisition wrote that after reading these records he was convinced that Alfonso de la Cavalleria abetted Arbues’ murderers and was saved from his just deserts only through the intervention of the king. F. Fita, *España Hebrea*, I, p. 141, objected to this conclusion, although he was unaware that the main body of the records still existed. Both Serrano and Lea also did not read the records. See also Lea, vol. I, p. 295 (on the trial of Jaime de la Cavalleria), where the subject is inadequately treated. =

53. See Jaume Vicens i Vives, *Ferran II i la ciutat de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1936–37), vol. I, pp. 102, 197 ff., 204, 207 ff., 279, 395 (on the Inquisition); vol. II, pp. 67, 73 ff., and *passim*. =

54. Alfonso’s remark about Julius Caesar was attested to by Franciscus Carbonell, *archivero del rey de la ciutat de Barcelona*. I do not know whether there was any blood relationship between this witness and the historian P. M. Carbonell (see below, n. 66). His testimony appears in Paris ms. 74, fol. 18. I did not copy out the statement, and my notes contain only a brief reference to the matter. =

55. In the list published by Lea, vol. I, pp. 595, 598, *et seq.* =

56. Baer II, pp. 464 ff. See my note in the introduction, *ibid.*, p. xii. The same material is presented by Lea, vol. I, pp. 602 ff. Concerning the spear of Longinus, see K. Burdach, *Vorspiel*, pp. 174, 182. =

57. This figure is taken from the table in Lea; see above. =

58. Baer I, no. 563. The expulsion from Teruel did not take place before 1492, as is proven in the little book by Floriano which I shall cite in full below. See ch. XV, n. 11. See also Pedro Sanahuja, *Lerida en sus luchas por la fé* (Lerida, 1946), pp. 128–179, for further information on the establishment of the Inquisition in Lerida from 1486 onwards, the opposition it met, and its achievements there. =

59. The material to follow has been dealt with on a number of occasions by Spanish historians, most recently in the fundamental book by Vicens (above, n. 53), vol. I, pp. 365 ff., who comments openly on his predecessors’ views. Vicens was an adherent of the political line in fashion at the time of his book’s appearance, but he is no doubt correct in his evaluation of the king’s desires for reform. Negotiations over the admission of the Inquisition to Barcelona began, as they did in the towns of Aragon, as early as 1484. Among the arguments presented by the municipal authorities of Barcelona on November 1, 1484, was the interesting claim (Vicens, vol. I, p. 378, n. 52) that due to economic factors the king had exempted certain cities, among them Toledo and

Burgos, from inquisitional authority. If this claim was just, we have an additional explanation of the peculiarities of the Inquisition's policies towards Toledo, which I have tried to elaborate in the previous pages. As for Burgos, there too we would have reason to suspect that the exemption granted to this city from the jurisdiction of the heresy hunters was a result of economic motives, rather than of the impeccable Christianity of its *converso* citizens. =

60. See Vicens, I, p. 375, n. 37. =

61. This figure is quoted by Vicens, *ibid.*, p. 385, after the records of the town council. The author believes it to be an exaggeration. If the figure were correct, it would follow that the fleeing refugees (*viz.*, *conversos*!) formed a tenth part of the town's population, a percentage which, he believes, is far too high. =

62. *Ibid.*, p. 376. =

63. Cf. in particular the formulation of these suggestions as cited by Vicens, pp. 392 ff. The author (p. 393) regards the religious tolerance displayed in these proposals as the distinguishing feature between the Catalanian mentality and the policies of the Castilian Inquisition. We have seen, however, that such conscientious protestations of religious tolerance took place likewise in Castile. =

64. See Vicens, p. 413. =

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 408 ff. Until the moment of his flight, Antonio's official title had been *regens cancellariam*. On his promotion of the Inquisition in Barcelona, see *ibid.*, esp. p. 384. =

66. See the documents originally assembled by P. M. Carbonell and published in 1865 by M. de Bofarull, *CDIA*, XXVIII. The sentencing of St. Jordi and his wife is mentioned on pp. 12–13. The sentences meted out to Casafranca and his wife appear in their entirety on pp. 171 ff. and 201 ff. This book also contains much relevant statistical information which has not yet been made use of by historians. On p. 19, the *converso* Franciscus Guerret is quoted as saying “that all the evils that have befallen us are the fault of women, and that cheap whore, the Queen, is the cause of our going about as exiles in the world.” See also Carreras, *EUC*, III, 501 ff., and Vicens, II, 322. Alfonso de Spina, the inquisitor of Barcelona and a Dominican, has been mistakenly identified with the author of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, who was a Franciscan. This is a good place to mention the passage from the works of R. Abraham b. Eliezer Halevi which was published by G. Scholem, *Kiryath-Sefer*, VII (1930–31), p. 136: “Know, then, that the Lord delivered into my hands a copy of a certain manuscript, which was found by one of our notables, R. Abraham Portal, in a ruined synagogue in the Kingdom of Catalonia. Now this manuscript was written four or five years before the Expulsion from Spain, which took place in 1492, agreeing with our prediction that the Ingathering of the Exiles would commence at that time. It says there [in the manuscript] that in the two-hundred-and-thirty-fifth year of the sixth millennium [i.e., 1475], a she-bear full of eyes would arise in Spain, and this refers to the wicked Queen Isabel. Furthermore, it says that then the exiled *anussim* would be taken away to worship foreign gods, fulfilling the prophecy of Ezekiel, may he rest in peace (Ezek. 15.7), as it was interpreted by [in the Aramaic translation of] Jonathan ben Uziel, may he rest in peace, to wit, that they would leave the Torah which had been given in fire, and be delivered unto nations as strong as iron. Still

further, it tells of decrees to be issued against the Holy People, the which to relate would surpass all belief . . . and they shall know that these are the birth-pangs of the Messiah, which will be prolonged forty-five years until the time of the Ingathering of the Exiles, and at the onset of this the Jews shall be expelled from their places of habitation into the wilderness and there shall be many taxes and levies . . . hereto.” (In the *Emek ha-Bakha* of Joseph Hacoen [Vienna, 1852], p. 82, the words “and [they would] burn in a mighty fire” are added to Jonathan ben Uziel’s translation. It would appear that during the period of the Expulsion, in response to the particulars of differing situations, various versions of this translation came into being.) “And it is well-known that in 1475, in Spain, began the reign of the wicked Queen Isabel, she who has brought upon us all these evils, and that in 1485 [the text should read 1483] began the period of forty-five years and the principal sufferings and afflictions, for in that year the she-bear expelled Israel from all of Andalusia, and from thence to this very day the afflictions have not ceased, and the taxes and levies increased until 1492, when came the general expulsion of all the Exiles of Jerusalem who were then in Spain,” etc. See also G. Scholem, *Cabalistic Manuscripts . . . in Jerusalem* (Hebrew) (1930), p. 88, and my article in *Zion* (*Meassef*), V, 71. = 67. See Baer II, no. 410; also, above, ch. XII, n. 34. See also R. del Arco, *Sefarad*, VII, 300: “*Desde Sevilla, a 10 de diciembre de 1484, Fernando el Católico envió carta al Justicia encargando apremiase al rabí y al sacristán de la sinagoga (de Huesca) para que los judíos designados dijese verdad en lo que les fuere preguntado por los inquisidores de la heretica pravadad.*” ACA, Reg. 3684, f. 31^v. = 68. Mention is made of this incident in the defense of Abraham Alitienz, Bordeaux ms. 1152, fol. 15, among the texts in Baer II, p. 496. = 69. Baer II, p. 491. *Ibid.*, p. 489. See also above, n. 67. = 70. *Ibid.*, p. 496, par. 47 ff. = 71. The records of Abraham Alitienz’s defense are unusually long. Lengthy excerpts from them were published in Baer II, pp. 494 ff. For the incident involving his son, see *ibid.*, p. 485. = 72. *Ibid.*, pp. 505–506. = 73. The pontifical edicts have been published by Fita, *España Hebrea*, I, 128 ff., and by Llorca, *Bulario*, 112 ff. (see above, n. 7). = 74. These two booklets are to be found in ms. 356, *Fonds espagnols*, in the National Library in Paris. The second of these (*Tratado del Alborayque*) appeared in print as early as 1500, as can be learned from A. Paz y Melia, *El cronista A. de Palencia*, p. 355, where this book is quoted. The Paris manuscript was written in its entirety by a single scribe, and the handwriting indicates that it was written down shortly after its composition. The two booklets were composed in 1488. In the first booklet, fol. 17–18, the author jeers at the Jews’ belief in the future coming of the Messiah, who had in reality already appeared 1488 years ago. In the second book, too, on fol. 61^v, the statement is made that 1488 years have passed since the coming of the true Messiah. Selections from both booklets have been published by Isidore Loeb, *REJ*, XVIII (1889) 231; *BAH*, XXIII (1893), 370. In the *BAH* they were annotated by Graetz (whose notes also appeared in *REJ*, XX [1890], 237 ff.) and by Fita. Both these excellent authors, however, indulged there in imaginary speculations which do not merit discussion.

Graetz was generally far removed from any realistic understanding of the Inquisition, a shortcoming which was natural in the light of the state of scholarship at the time. Fita was successful in identifying Fray Fernando de San Domingo. Loeb's selections do not suffice to give a true picture of the intentions of the authors of these two booklets, and the account given by me below is taken directly from their manuscript. N. López Martínez, *Los judaizantes castellanos y la Inquisición en tiempo de Isabel la Católica* (Burgos, 1954), 391-444, published the *Tratado del Alborayque* on the basis of Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid), ms. 17891, fol. 233r-264r, copy of the year 1589. =

75. The records of one of the defendants, Yuce Franco, were preserved in their entirety, and inserted among them were fragments from the records of the trials of the other defendants. The trial of Yuce Franco has been published by Fita, *BAH*, XI (1887). Shortly after the discovery of these records, Isidore Loeb, *REJ*, XV (1887), 203 ff., and the American Protestant scholar, H. C. Lea, *English Historical Review* (1889) and *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain* (Philadelphia, 1890), 203 ff., wrote articles in which they proved that the accusation on the basis of which the accused were condemned was a pure fabrication. I am, therefore, satisfied to follow in the path of these two learned men, although it seems to me nonetheless that I have managed to investigate a number of additional details and to elaborate on their historical connections. Graetz accepted Loeb's criticism, but added speculations of his own which need not, be discussed here. See the last edition of the eighth volume of his great work. More recently, Rafael Sabatini, in a book that appeared, apparently, several times, bearing no date (first printing 1913?) and under the title *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition*, has undertaken to investigate the trial in great detail in order to find some basis for the accusation. All that he writes is essentially pure sophistry, an inspection of which only serves to reinforce the truth. Among the Spanish books which have lately come to my notice, I must mention the book by Manuel Romero de Castilla, *Singular suceso en el reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, Prologo del Marqués de Lozoya (Madrid, n.d., ca. 1945). The subject of the book is "the holy child of La Guardia," and it includes dramas on this topic by the playwrights Lope de Vega and José de Cañizares. The book is a blatantly antisemitic work. The recent general histories of the Inquisition which I mentioned above in n. 7 do not deal explicitly with this trial, but they contain a number of allusions against which one must protest vigorously, especially inasmuch as all of these books were published with open ecclesiastical approval. De la Pinta, for example, in his book on the Inquisition, pp. 22-24, validates the incident of the flogging of the crucifix (see above, in the present chapter, n. 56) on the basis of Baer II, pp. 464 ff., despite the fact that on p. xii of the introduction to that book I demonstrated that the testimony was fabricated. See also similar remarks concerning the trial of La Guardia by Llorca, *Sefarad*, II (1942), 117-118; Llorca, *La Inquisición*, pp. 69 f.; N. López Martínez *Los judaizantes castellanos*, pp. 193-200. =

76. Fita, pp. 59-60. =

77. For the testimony of Antonio de Avila and Fr. Alonso Enríques on the 19th of July and the 26th of October, see Fita, pp. 56 ff. The statement about the time being "about eleven years ago" (*podria aver*

onze años) stands in complete conflict with other statements about times which are given by other witnesses later in this trial. Fita (p. 57, n. 2) tries in vain to solve this conflict. But far more important is the question, how did it come about that Yuce Franco remained in prison for weeks and months, with no written and signed protocol ever drawn up stating the reasons for his arrest? The few words drawn from Yuce Franco in July 1490 and put down in writing as formal testimony so as to serve as proof against the accused, can hardly serve, from the viewpoint of historical criticism, as a confession admitting commission, as it were, of the crime. The simple meaning of the story is that Yuce Franco wished to tell Don Abraham Seneor, the chief rabbi and leading personality of all Spanish Jews, the reason for the terrible accusation that was the cause of his arrest. But later on, in Avila prison, on September 16, 1491 (Fita, p. 58 f.), he was confronted with the testimonies drawn from him in July, 1490, and this time some kind of assent was extorted confirming that his words were meant to describe the crucifixion in all its details, as they were said to have been revealed in the later stages of the trial! ⇐

78. Fita, pp. 27 f. On October 28, 1490 (pp. 28 f.) another testimony was extorted from Yuce Franco, about the interest which the *conversos* showed in the Passover rites. Various strange concepts, smacking strongly of antisemitism, were mixed in, and there is no use going into details. ⇐

79. This order is in Fita, pp. 9–11. Missing from the list of names is Isaac Franco, Yuce's father, and it is possible that he was not arrested until afterwards. Moses Franco, Yuce's brother, is also missing, but his name does not appear in the later records of the trial at all. Moses Abenarnias of Zamora is mentioned again below in connection with an incident that is to my mind fictitious (see above, in text, p. 412), and it may be that no such person ever existed. At any event, no mention is made of his actual imprisonment, and there is reason to suspect that the court clerk registered the name on the basis of the entry which he found later on. It is, however, impossible to render a decision on the matter without first seeing the manuscript from which Fita copied. ⇐

80. Fita, pp. 22 ff. ⇐

81. This letter of Torquemada was discovered and published by Fita, *BAH*, XXIII (1893), 413 ff. The theories he constructed on it are far-fetched. ⇐

82. Llorea, *Anal Sacra Tarraconensia*, p. 54. n. 29. ⇐

83. Fita, pp. 12–14. Loeb, on p. 203 of his article, wrote that this was not a blood libel in the usual sense of the word! But he was not sufficiently familiar with the details of the history of this accusation and of its eventual development. In the Middle Ages the charge of performing a *communicare* on the heart of a Christian child was quite common. See, for example, the well known edict of Innocent IV in M. Stern, *Urkundliche Beiträge über die Stellung der Päpste zu den Juden* (Kiel, 1893), vol. I, p. 64, S. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (Philadelphia, 1933), pp. 268 ff., no. 116, and Baer I, p. 153; other instances could also be adduced. On the material presented in the *Fortalitium Fidei* that served as the basis for the trial under discussion, see Lea's article. Neither the guidebook of Bernardus Guidonis nor of Nicolaus Eymerich contained similar matter. The charge of interfering with the inquisitional activities by means of black magic is referred to in the *Sefer Mahazik ha-Emunah* of Mordecai b.

Joseph of Avignon (Gross, *Gallia Jud.*, pp. 3–4, *Hamazkir*, XVI [1876], 43). =

84. Fita, pp. 34–37. =

85. . . . *fasta que le fiziera conoscer con que le quemen.* =

86. . . . *que le han dicho los inquisidores que poco a poco le avian de quemar.* =

87. Fita, p. 35: . . . *que estos inquisidores dioses eran.* My own guess is that the manuscript contains the abbreviated form *dos*, which should be read as *diablos*. =

88. . . . *como los huesos de la coluebra.* See *Bereshith Rabba* on the verse (Gen. 3.14) ‘upon thy belly shalt thou go’: “And the heavenly angels descended and cut off his arms and legs.” The *meshummad* was placed in the category of one who tempts another to idolatry; his prototype is the serpent of paradise (Sanhedrin 29a). In the words of Benito García, attention should be paid to the recurrent phrase: “And through all this he places his soul at the disposal of his Maker.” See the *Megilath Amrafel* of R. Abraham Halevi (below, ch. XV, n. 4), *Kiryath-Sefer*, VII (1930–31), 154, where it is stated that he who is preparing for martyrdom should confess his sins and thus “dispose his soul to his God.” =

89. There does not appear to me to be any contradiction between this and Benito’s previous declaration that he had been born and educated as a Jew. Rather, in making this request, he meant to protest against any doubts which might arise concerning his Jewishness. =

90. Fita, p. 36, n. 3, takes this to be an allusion to Holy Friday, which in 1491 fell on April 1st. =

91. Fita, p. 36. My guess is that this word refers to the hymn to Elijah (*Eliahu ha-navi*). Loeb wishes to read: *Ata honantanu* (the prayer for the new week which is inserted in the *shemoneh esrey* on Saturday night). Or perhaps there existed a supplication which began with the words *eli haneni* (my Lord, have mercy upon me). =

92. Fita, pp. 32–33. =

93. Fita, p. 30. =

94. Fita, p. 31. =

95. Fita, pp. 39 ff. =

96. According to Sabatini, p. 319, Yuce Franco’s alibi has a basis in reality, since after the passing of a year—so went the belief—the magical powers lapsed and there was no longer any need to conceal the truth! This explanation is totally unfounded, however, inasmuch as the incantations were performed, according to witnesses, two or three years before the giving of testimony. Moreover, the claim of being sworn to silence until a certain period of the imprisonment had passed appears further on in mutually contradictory versions. =

97. Such is the exact language of the court’s sentence (Nov. 16, 1491). Fita, p. 105. =

98. The journey to Santiago and back by way of Astorga was a fact known to Yuce Franco from his talks with Benito García. But in order to arrive in Zamora one does not travel from La Guardia to Santiago. This has already been pointed out by Isidore Loeb. =

99. Fita, pp. 42–44. =

100. Fita, pp. 61–62. =

101. Fita, pp. 44–45. =

102. Fita, pp. 46–47. =

103. Fita, p. 48. ⇐
 104. Fita, p. 55. ⇐
 105. Fita, pp. 55–56. ⇐
 106. Fita, pp. 52–55. ⇐
 107. Fita, pp. 50–51. ⇐
 108. On this day he questioned Yuce Franco and Juan de Ocaña. Fita, pp. 51, 65. ⇐
 109. Fita, pp. 65 ff. ⇐
 110. He is introduced with the title *presentado en santa theologia*, as in the trial of Teresa de Lucena. (*Supra*, p. 346.) ⇐
 111. Fita, p. 69. On October 21, Fernando de Santo Domingo was still in Ávila. See Fita, pp. 24, 54. ⇐
 112. Fita, pp. 72 ff. ⇐
 113. Fita, pp. 80 ff. ⇐
 114. According to Yuce Franco, one of the things said about Jesus was, “*que . . . venia ... a echar paxarillas a bolar*,” a phrase borrowed from the Christian book *Infantia Salvatoris*, as was pointed out by Fita, p. 84; see, for example, E. Hennecke, *Neutestamentl. Apokryphen* (1904), p. 54. Further on such absurdities as “*que fasia cesar a los pescados en la mar ... e que cavalgava sobre el sol*” were introduced. ⇐
 115. Fita, p. 89. See the note by Loeb in his above-mentioned article, p. 224, n. 1. ⇐
 116. “. . . *haviendole dado un jarro de agua*,” Fita, p. 91—“an inhuman torture,” as Fita himself writes. See the other testimony given on the same days in Fita, pp. 90–94. ⇐
 117. Fita, p. 95. ⇐
 118. Fita, p. 96. ⇐
 119. Fita, p. 96. ⇐
 120. See Fita, pp. 114–128. To the records of Yuce Franco’s trial two additional documents were added (Fita, pp. 109 ff.). The first of these consists of testimony taken on November 18, 1491—two days after the death of the martyrs—from the sacristan of the church of La Guardia, who gave a confused account of the furnishing of the host to the condemned *conversos*. I see no need actually to analyze this testimony, the contrivances of which are by now familiar to us. During the trial itself the inquisitors did not seem anxious to seek an explanation of this facet of the case. The second document contains the testimony given on November 17—the day after the burning of the accused—by a certain Gabriel Sanchez, a resident of Ávila, concerning an exchange overheard in the prison between Juan de Ocaña and Juan Franco on the same subject of the host. I know nothing of the character of this witness, but his testimony is couched in the accustomed style. Obviously, this document does not merit special attention. Fita, pp. 112 ff., cites yet another document which is taken from the book of Fray Rodrigo de Yepes (*del monasterio de S. Jeronimo el real de Madrid*), *Historia de la muerte y glorioso martirio del Sancto Innocente, que llaman de la Guardia* (Madrid, 1583). This document—whose true intentions may have been to defame the Inquisition rather than to defend it—seems to me to be a late forgery, but because its authenticity has been accepted by so critical a scholar as Lea, *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*, p. 454, I should like to deal with it briefly. What is involved is a letter, supposedly written by a certain Anton González, the municipal

notary of Ávila, and addressed to the town council and distinguished citizens of La Guardia. González writes of the crimes which the accused committed with the “*Inocente*”—a word which does not occur in the records of the trial itself—and of the condemned men’s ultimate fate. Benito García, Juan de Ocaña, and Yuce Franco were executed by choking after having repented, and died as good Christians. The others were burnt alive “as good Jews.” Further on in his letter the writer continues: “Señor Alonso Dominguez will relate to you the child’s birthplace and the place where he was crucified. May it please our Lord to miraculously show us his bones.” The writer requests not to plow under the site indicated by Juan Franco, for it deserves to be seen by “*sus altezas*” (the king and queen), the cardinal and the entire world; indeed, a memorial should be erected to the sufferings of the “holy child,” in the hope that it might prove conducive to the performance of miracles. Finally, the writer mentions that the inquisitors have ordered the outcome of the trial to be made public throughout La Guardia, and he concludes with the warning, “to the rumormongers of that distinguished place,” to be careful of what they say, “for the ass is saddled” (*el asno está enalbardado*)—a phrase typical of the hyperboles with which the sixteenth century spoke of the Inquisition. If there is any truth at all to be found in this letter, it is in the fact that the location of the child’s grave was not known at the time. The conductors of the trial were not interested in searching for the site, and so showed greater intelligence than the officials of Regensburg (see below, n. 121), who found in the indicated place not only the body of one child, but the bones of several corpses which the perpetrators had transferred to the abandoned spot. 121. There is reason to believe that the Spanish inquisitors were not immune to influences from abroad. Particular mention should be made of the blood libel which took place in Trent in 1475. The many records of this trial are still deposited in the archives, but a good number of them can be found scattered throughout the exhaustive book *Dissertazione apologetica sul martirio del Beato Simone da Trento nell’ anno 1475 dagli Ebrei ucciso* (Trent, 1747). It was the purpose of the fanatical Catholic author of this book to publicize the miracle of the holy child and to war against the Jews, the enemies of Christianity. The fact of the matter is that the many original sources cited in this book amply demonstrate the infamous falsehoods of the trial. The trial in Trent had a direct influence on the trial which took place in Regensburg in 1476–1480. Parts of the records of this trial have been published by M. Stern, *Jahrbuch d. jüd. lit. Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main, 1930–32), vols. 18–20. These trials, which took place before the eye of the Jewish and Christian public and aroused sharp and sometimes constructive criticism even at the time, differed from the proceedings of the Inquisition, which were conducted behind closed doors and could be held without even going through the formality of presenting some sort of objective evidence. ←

NOTES TO CHAPTER XV

1. As the policy of persecuting the *conversos* came increasingly into effect, the ties between the *conversos* and Jews were strengthened, and

the rabbinical *halakhists* tended more and more to give the former the benefit of the doubt and judge them as completely Jewish. Much can be learned on this subject from the evolution of scholarly opinion in the responsa literature over a period of three generations. R. Isaac b. Sheshet, who was an eye-witness of the decay of the generation which belonged to the years preceding 1391, tended to deal with *conversos* harshly and bitterly. R. Simon b. Zemach Duran, on the other hand, and his son and two grandsons, R. Solomon and R. Zemach and R. Simon, were progressively more inclined to be lenient, and taught: "Those apostates who are called *anussim* are to be judged as Israelites." This was also the opinion of R. Saadia ibn Danan in his famous responsum which was printed in the *Hemdah Genuzah*. See the article by S. Assaf, "The *Anussim* of Spain and Portugal in the Responsa Literature" (Hebrew), *Zion* (annual), V (1933); especially pp. 32 ff., 41, 47 and 53 ff. The opinion of one zealot stands out in contrast [A. Marx, *JQR*, XX (1908), 252]: "And it would appear that it was God's intention to destroy all those equivocating *anussim*, who acted as if they had invented a new Law unto themselves, but whose end proves that they did not die the death of martyrs, for when they were asked in which religion they wished to die, they chose Christianity in order to die the easier death. They died with the cross in their hands, and only a small number of them, most of whom were women, died as Jews." As is borne out in the book by E. Schäfer, this same practice was common among the Protestant believers who were burnt by the Spanish Inquisition in the sixteenth century; it seems that similar psychological considerations have affected the behavior of various religious communities. The Jewish zealot quoted above demanded of his disciples a degree of fortitude which would have been super-human. Among the preachers of the Expulsion period whose complete sympathy went out to the *conversos*, we should mention R. Isaac 'Arama (*'Aqedat Yitzhak, sha'ar* 98) and R. Isaac Abravanel, who adopted a similar position in several well-known books. ←

2. Consult also the article by H. H. Ben-Sasson: "The Generation of the Spanish Exiles on Its Fate" (*Zion*, XXVI [1961], 23–64). My friend Ben-Sasson has collected in this important article some new and interesting facts, gathered from contemporary Hebrew literature. Of main importance are the facts gathered from R. Joel ibn Sho'eb's commentary to the book of Psalms. I cannot, however, agree with all of Ben-Sasson's conclusions. For example, Ben-Sasson attributes to R. Joel himself the very words of despair against which R. Joel is arguing. In any case, Ben-Sasson has taught us to attach due importance to the homiletics of this R. Joel, who seemingly officiated in Saragossa during the years immediately preceding the Expulsion. See also his statements in the book *'Olat Shabbath*, fol. 138 ff. about the various "holy societies" (*hebroth*) in his community, and also fol. 105, his reproof against people of his town who went "to feast with Idolatry"—meaning the festivities put on in honor of the king's visit to the town?—"even in these days, when every day brings new sufferings, as is the case today in the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon"; and he states further: "but when they [the Jews] are under the Realm of one King, as we are today in Spain, then there is no escape but to the Lord alone" (fol. 106). Among other interesting facts from the article of Ben-Sasson, I wish to

mention the portrait of Haman, given by Abraham Shalom as a typical “antisemite,” who gives the king “eight good reasons” for exterminating the Jews; see the book *Neve Shalom* (of R. Abraham Shalom), V, 6; Ben-Sasson, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–54. ←

3. See Gershom Scholem, “The (cabalistic) Responsa of R. Joseph Alcastiel to R. Judah Hayyat” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz*, XXIV (1955) 167–206. As Scholem demonstrates, R. Meir ibn Gabbai borrows from the works of R. Joseph Alcaatiel (without citing his source) once in his *Sefer Tola’ath Ya’akov*, and several times in his *Sefer ‘Avodath ha-Kodesh*—in part I, chs. 31, 33 and 37, and part IV, chs. 11 and 17. See Scholem’s article, p. 171, and his notes to the texts of the responsa. It is highly probable that there are still additional passages in the *Sefer ‘Avodath ha-Kodesh* which derive from the teachings of R. Joseph Alcastiel. The generally human vision—which has already been remarked upon by Zunz, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*, p. 381—corresponds nicely with R. Joseph Alcastiel’s outlook on the question of the transmigration of Gentile souls; see *Tarbiz*, XXIV (1955), 170, 181–185. On Jativa, see ch. XIV n. 33. R. Joseph Alcastiel’s responsa to R. Judah Hayyat were written in the city of Jativa in 1482; this year signifies the turning point in the history of the Inquisition in the Kingdom of Valencia: see above ch. XIV, n. 33. ←

4. This excerpt is taken from R. Abraham Halevi’s *Megilath Amrafel*, published by G. Scholem, first in a German translation (accompanied by valuable notes) that appeared in the jubilee volume for Martin Buber (1928), pp. 89–94, and later in the Hebrew original, *Kiryath-Sefer*, VII (1930–31), 153–155; on the related Ashkenazi tradition, see *ibid.*, p. 441. See also the note by D. Tamar, *Kiryath-Sefer*, XXXIII (1958), 376. On the basis of my article in *Zion*, XXI (1956), p. 3, n. 6, I am tempted to believe that the exegesis on the verse “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?” is based upon an old fragment of the midrash to the Song of Songs. Parallel stories are told about the early Christian martyrs, who neither cried nor groaned in the hour of trial, nor felt what was being done to them, for their eyes were fixed upon the heavenly glory. See K. Holl, “Die Vorstellung vom Märtyrer,” etc., *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte*, II, 71–73. See also my remarks in the *Sefer Assaf* (Jerusalem, 1953), p. 139, n. 57. ←

5. On the lot of the Jews in the provinces of the Kingdom of Granada at the time of the conquest, see Baer II, nos. 366, 367, 368, 376. ←

6. For the contracts and legislation of 1491 having to do with tax-farming, see Baer II, no. 372. ←

7. For the edict of Expulsion, see *ibid.*, no. 378, and no. 420, p. 516. A photographic copy of the original edict, bearing the signature of the king and queen (from the municipal archives of Avila), appears on the book by M. Romero de Castilla (above, ch. XIV, n. 75). See also P. León Tello, *Judíos de Ávila* (Ávila, 1963), pp. 91–95; L. Suárez Fernández, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judíos* (Valladolid, 1964); H. Ben-Sasson, “An Elegy on the Expulsion from Spain,” *Tarbiz*, XXXI (1961), 59–71. In the collection of letters *Epistolario de Pedro Mártir de Angleria*, tr. by J. López de Toro (Madrid, 1953) [*Documentos inéditos publ. por los señores Duque de Alba*, etc., vol. IX], lib. I, epist.

- 92, pp. 172–173, there appears a letter written in Granada on March 11, 1492, in which the proclamation of the Expulsion of the Jews is greeted with great satisfaction. The copyists of this letter undoubtedly misinterpreted the date and confused the chronological order of the letters. On the writer of the letter, see below, n. 15. ⇐
8. On the timing of the publication of the edict, see Baer II, p. 407. On the attempts to delay its enactment, see the well-known passage by Abravanel in his introduction to the *Sefer Melakhim* and the account given by R. Elijah Capsali (Lattes, pp. 70 ff.), which is a mixture of truth and legend. On the efforts to associate Alfonso de Cavalleria with the attempted intervention, see Baer II, p. 459. ⇐
9. On the execution of the Edict of Expulsion, see Baer II, no. 378 (the notes at the end of the document) and nos. 380–391; Baer I, nos. 565–567. In an article in *Sefarad*, XV (1955), L. Piles and J. Cabezudo present new material concerning the economic conditions among the Jews of Valencia and Saragossa at the time of the Expulsion. See also, regarding the execution of the Edict of Expulsion in Huesca, the documents in *Sefarad*, IX (1949), 386–392. ⇐
10. See Serrano, *Orígenes*, pp. 55 ff. ⇐
11. For governmental edicts calculated to encourage conversion and support converts, see Baer II, the notes at the end of no. 378. See also *ibid.*, no. 381, par. 1, and *passim*. The events which took place in Teruel are written up in the protocols of the town council; Antonio C. Floriano, *La aljama de judíos de Teruel*, etc. (Teruel, 1926), 17 f. ⇐
12. Information on incidents of conversion at the time of the Expulsion can be found in most of the local monographs listed in Baer II, no. 378, p. 408. See also *ibid.*, pp. 436, 459, 464, 467, 579 (toward the end of no. 420) and no. 422 (various apostates from the period of the Expulsion). The following passage from R. Joseph Ya'abetz's *Sefer Or ha-Hayyim*, ch. II, is well-known: "These very men, after having taken great pride in their knowledge of God through their wisdom, now cast off the yoke of the Torah and the commandments, estrange themselves from their Father in heaven, and in their hearts mock and make sport of those who observe the Torah and the commandments . . . I have been young and now am old; and yet I have not seen more than one out of a hundred of them occupy himself with the Torah and the commandments, and this one was a vacillator . . . Unto you, O men, I call from the Spanish exile, whither we were banished for our many great sins; but nearly all those who took pride in their wisdom relinquished their glory [i.e., converted] on the bitter day, while women and humble folk surrendered their bodies and possessions for the sanctification of their Creator." And in ch. V: "For it was the Spanish women who persuaded their husbands to martyr themselves for God, blessed be He, while those who prided themselves on their wisdom exchanged their glory on the bitter day; and this is a mighty proof that had they not sought after wisdom, but remained among the simple, their simplicity would have saved them, for God preserveth the simple." Passages of the same ilk appear in his book *Hasdei Adonai*, which was recently re-issued by Rabbi Samuel Heilprin (Jerusalem, 1934), particularly on p. 37. According to Bernáldez, only a few of the Jews, and these among the poorest, converted; but this author's sole intention is to prove how stubborn the Jews were and that they were not deserving of mercy.

On the other hand, certain Jewish authors, seeking to vindicate their contemporaries, tried to make out that nearly everyone withstood the trial. But paralleling Ya'abetz writes R. Abraham b. Solomon Arduziel (see below) and Capsali, p. 72: "In those desolate days thousands and ten-thousands of Jews became apostates," etc. Capsali and others also tell of many Jews who actually departed from Spain, but, finding no country which would grant them refuge, returned and converted. The conversion of Don Abraham Seneor and R. Meir Melamed is mentioned in the *Cronica de Valladolid, Col. de Doc. Ined.*, p. 1. *Hist. de España*, XIII (Baer II, p. 411, toward the end of no. 380). See Capsali, p. 73, and the anonymous author in Marx, *JQR*, XX (1908), 250, Judah Abravanel's lamentation has recently been published in several places, among them, S. Bernfeld's *Sefer ha-Dema'oth*, II, pp. 262 ff. C. Gebhardt, *Bibliotheca Spinozana*, III. On the Abravanel family, see Baer II, nos. 380, 381, 384. See also the articles by Sopranis cited above, ch. XIV, n. 6. A fuller excerpt from the passage by R. Abraham b. Solomon Arduziel reads: "And most of the Jews and their great men and their nobility and their magistrates remained in their homes and converted . . . And chief among the multitude of heretics, was the rabbi of the Spanish community, the Rab Don Abraham Seneor, and his children; and there were thousands and ten-thousands of like occurrences . . . And there were only a very few of the great men and leaders of Spain who resolved to submit to martyrdom, and the greatest of these was . . . the Rab Don Isaac Abravanel, may he rest in peace, who publicly sanctified the name of God before the king and his officials . . . he and the old scholar Don Solomon Seneor, the brother of the said Rab.

On the cabalistic doctrine of R. Abraham b. Solomon Arduziel (not Torrutiel!), see G. Scholem, *Kiryath-Sefer*, VII (1931), 457 ff. ⇐ 13. It is difficult to ascertain the size of the Jewish population of Castile in the years preceding the Expulsion by using the tax lists in Baer II, no. 350, which are based, as it were, on the heads of families; see no. 360. According to A. Bernáldez, *Hist. de los Reyes Católicos*, I, ch. 110, there were at the time of the Expulsion 35,000 Jewish families (*casas*) in Castile, and 6,000 in Aragon. Bernáldez gives as the source of his information a letter from R. Meir Melamed to his father-in-law, Abraham Seneor, and the statement of a Jew from Vitoria whom he himself baptized. The anonymous author in Marx, *JQR*, XX (1908), 250, writes: "After much investigation the most agreed upon estimate that I heard was 50,000 heads of families, and some say 53,000." One of the exiles, Isaac ibn Farax, *ibid.*, p. 266, writes that in Castile, Aragon and Navarre "expulsions and conversions" affected "over forty-thousand Jewish homes," a figure that corresponds to Bernáldez's. In the introduction to his *Sefer Melakhim*, and *Sefer Ma'aynay ha-Yeshu'ah*, Abravanel declares ("and for witnesses I take the fear of heaven and God's glorious presence") that in the year of the Expulsion the number of Jews in the Kingdom of Spain was "three-hundred thousand souls." The German traveller Hieronymus Münzer (in 1494–95) speaks of more than one-hundred thousand Jewish families (!) being expelled. (BAH, LXXXIV [1924], 67.) These exaggerated figures are valueless. Abraham Zacuto (Filipovsky, p. 277) asserts: "Most of Castile left for Portugal, because they could not leave by sea . . . more than

120,000 souls." From this it follows that, as the grand total for Castilian Jewry, Zacuto would have given a figure between 150,000 and 200,000. Similarly, the anonymous author in Marx writes: "And one-hundred-and-twenty-thousand of them entered the Kingdom of Portugal." To this number corresponds the figure given by Bernáldez (ch. 111) for the groups of Jews that crossed the Castilian-Portuguese border at various points—a total of 93,000 persons, more than half of the entire Jewish population of Castile, according to Bernáldez. I do not intend to deal here with the lot of the exiles after they left Spain. In regard to the situation in Portugal, Kayserling, *Geschichte der Juden in Portugal*, pp. 111 ff., lists the sources which were in his day available in print; the need is great, however, to investigate the Portuguese archives, which contain vast amounts of material from this period, on a more exhaustive scale. See, for example, the fresh documentary material presented in the periodical *Arquivo Historico Portuguez*, III; there, among other things, on pp. 315, 472, is a record of the fees of iron and copper smiths (*ferreiros, latoeiros*) who were allowed to enter Portugal by special agreement. Besides the Jews who emigrated to Portugal, Bernáldez cites the following figures: 2,000 persons entered Navarre; 300 families sailed from the port of Laredo (Vizcaya); 8,000 families sailed from Cádiz. Others, whose numbers he does not report, embarked from Cartagena and the harbors of Aragon. Here, too, we must await the results of additional research. Concerning the Jews, mostly poverty stricken, who departed from Almería and Málaga, see the lists in Baer II, no. 382. See also the contracts drawn up between Jewish exiles and Christian shipowners, Baer I, p. 918. According to the *Dietario de la Generalidad de Barcelona*, 10,000 Jews from all over Aragon, having first set out from the ports of Tarragona and Tortosa, re-embarked from Barcelona. See Fita, *Esp. Hebr.*, I, 243; *BAH*, XVIII (1891), 182; *REJ*, IX (1884), 66 f. I do not know what the number of exiles who sailed from Valencia was. Vidal, *REJ*, XVI (1888), 190–203, presents some interesting details on the expulsion from the province of Rousillon on the French border. F. Fita, "El Judío errante de Illescas," *BAH*, VI (1885), 130, has published inquisitional documents dealing with the adventures of one of the exiles. This individual was brought as an eight-year-old child to Algiers, migrated to Italy (Venice and Genoa), converted there to Christianity, returned to Spain, learned the trade of silk-weaving, and in 1506 traveled once more to Italy (Livorno, Rome, Ferrara), where he encountered some Jewish fellow-craftsmen. He journeyed in the company of a Christian physician from Lisbon to Valona. In Salonica, Adrianopol, Constantinople, Brussa and Alexandria he again met various Spanish Jews, some of them fellow-craftsmen, who urged him to return to Judaism and even resorted to force. In 1514, he returned to Spain and confessed before the Inquisition. On the number of Jews in Spain, see vol. I, pp. 189 ff., and above, eh. IX and ch. XII, n. 4. See in general the views of J. Vicens Vives, *Manual de Historia Economica de España* (Barcelona, 1959), pp. 163 ff., 224 ff. E. Ashtor, "The Number of Jews in Moslem Spain" (Hebrew), *Zion*, XXVIII (1963), pp. 34 ff. ←

14. A detailed account of the exiles' behavior as they made their way to the seaports of Spain is to be found in Bernáldez, chs. 110–111; un

willingly, this foe of the Jews is forced to sing their praises. None of the Hebrew chronicles contain such a description of the exiles while still on Spanish soil. That the 31st of July (7th of Ab) was the last day of emigration is already indicated in the Edict of Expulsion, and is explicitly confirmed by Abraham Zacuto, by the Elegy (ed. Ben-Sasson, *Tarbiz* XXXI [1961], 59), and by the colophon of a Bible manuscript, a photographic copy of which can be found in A. Neuman, *Jews in Spain*, II (Philadelphia, 1944), p. 272: "This book was written . . . in the town of Toletola (Toledo) in Spain and finished in the month of Nissan, in the year five-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty-two . . . and on the seventh day of the month of Ab in this same year the exiles of Jerusalem that were in Spain left in hurried bewilderment according to the king's command . . ." Graetz's efforts to uphold the 9th of Ab as the correct date (vol. VIII, p. 349) are of no avail. The passage from R. Isaac Abravanel (which is cited by Graetz, *ibidem*, and likewise appears in the introductions to the *Sefer Melakhim* and *Sefer Ma'aynay ha-Yeshu'ah*) is entirely legendary, as I remarked in the text. A different version of the Expulsion legend is found in the works of R. Abraham b. Solomon Arduti, who was also one of the Spanish exiles. According to him, the Edict of Expulsion was made public in the month of Nissan and the first night of Passover became an occasion of mourning and bitter weeping—"and between Passover and Atzereth (Shebuot, Sivan 6), all the hosts of the Lord left Spain" (Neubauer, p. 111). We have seen, however, that the edict was not made public until the 29th of April, that is, the 2nd of Iyyar. More exact is the statement of our anonymous author (Marx, p. 250): "And the king gave them three months time, and the announcement was made in each and every city on the *calendae* day in May, which was the nineteenth day of the counting of the *Omer*. And the last of the days turned out to be the eve of the Ninth of Ab." Capsali adopts the legend created by Abravanel. ⇐

15. On the attitude of A. de Palencia, see above, ch. XIII, n. 27. In regard to the Italians, see the passages from the Italian historian Bartholomaeus Senarega, a citizen of Genoa (which are quoted by Wiener in his notes to the German translation of the *Sefer Emek ha-Bakha* [Leipzig, 1858], p. 199), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores . . . Nuova Edizione . . .* Tomo XXIV, Parte VIII, Bartholmaei Senaregae, *De Rebus Genuensibus Commentaria* a cura di Emilio Pandini (Bologna, MCMXXIX), p. 24:

Eodem tempore supplicationes ob adeptam Granatam per Reges Hispaniae, quae caput Baeticae est, in triduum decretae, quam regionem Mauri jam per tot annos occupaverant, et in omni ditione nostra edita laetitiae signa, qualia in maximis victoriis et in agendo Deo gratias ostendi solent. Donati sunt aere publico qui a Regibus Hispaniae pro hac re ad nos cum literis missi sunt de adepto regno et parta victoria mentionem facientibus; quibus responden per publicas literas visum est. Qui cum Catholicorum Regum titulum pro rebus egregie pro Christiana fide gestis sumsissent, judicantes etiam ex re Christiana esse, si inquisitionem eorum facerent, quos vulgus Marranos appellat, qui cum occulte Judaei essent, publice tamen se Christianos appellari volebant et cum plures in crimine deprehendissent, publicatis eorum bonis, omnes comburi jusserunt, famaue est magnam auri vim hoc modo

*extorsisse non sine avaritiae nota. Nec multo post reliquos Judaeos de Regnis suis excedere intra praefinitam diem debere decreverunt. Quod si quis vel paupertate, ut saepe contigit, vel alio casu, non paruisset, aut in ignem mittebatur aut characterem christianum sumebat. Panes fides Chrūti sequuti sunt; reliqua turba, alii in Italiam, alii in Graeciam et in eam Asiae partem, quae Graeciae est vicina, multi in Syriam et Aegyptum profecti. Res haec primo aspectu laudabilis, quia decus nostrae religionis respiceret, sed aliquantulum in se crudelitatis visa est continere, si eos non belluas sed homines a Deo creatos consideraverimus. Miserum fuit vidisse eorum calamitates . . . Pico della Mirandola, *Adversus astrologos Hb.*, V, eh. I, XII, Opera 1504, fol. 158, 164^r; Guicciardiūi, *Relazione di Spagna* (a. 1512–1513), *Opere* (Florence, 1857–67), vol. VI, pp. 270 ff.; Machiavelli, *Principe*, ch. 21. Also among the antisemites who justified the Expulsion was Petrus Martyr Anglerius. See the article by Antonio de la Torre in *Homenatge a A. Rubio i Luch*, vol. I, p. 433. See above also, n. 7. Of the relevant European literature of this period, I was able to review in their entirety only the Spanish sources dating up to the time of the Expulsion. An industrious reader may possibly discover additional statements by Christians of the Expulsion era, but I doubt if he will find a single defense of the exiles. ←*

NOTES TO APPENDIX

1. Américo Castro, *España en su historia* (Buenos Aires, 1948). Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, *España in enigma hutorico* (Buenos Aires, 1956; *segunda edicion*, 1962). ←
2. Sánchez Albornoz, II, p. 255. ←
3. Castro, pp. 547–548: “Lo peculiar y nuevo de la Inquisición yacía en la sutil perversidad de sus procedimientos, en el misterio de sus pesquisas, en tener como base de sus juicios la delación y el chisme.” ←
4. Sánchez Albornoz, II, p. 288. ←
5. *Ibid.*, p. 289. ←
6. F. Martínez Guijón, “La prueba judicial en el derecho territorial de Navarra y Aragón durante la baja Edad Media,” *Anuario de historia del derecho español*, XXXI (1961), 16 ff., 41: “(En Aragón) muy pronto se mezcla la primitiva pesquisa con el procedimiento romano-canónico per inquisitionem, y la consecuencia de ello es que la inquisitio tienda a ser aplicada solamente en el proceso penal. *Ibid.*, p. 42 (Feuro general de Navarra, 2, 5, 10–11): Todos los vecinos están obligados a sufrir el interrogatorio . . . , pero los pesquisadores, posiblemente por influencia de la inquisitio canónica deben guardar secreto sobre las declaraciones de los interrogados.” Angel López y Amo Marín, “El derecho penal español de la Baja Edad Media,” *Anuario*, XXVI (1956), 558: “El procedimiento inquisitivo existe (en Aragón y Cataluña) como en Castilla, desde el siglo XIII, y lo vemos aprobado en Cortes de Monzón de 1289 bajo Alfonso III.” ←
7. Sánchez Albornoz, p. 292: “Claro está que el modelo judaico fué imitado porque la pugna con judios y conversos fué creando en la sociedad castellana una singular porosidad para la recepción de las

prácticas malsínicas de delaciones y soplonerías, de la costumbre sinagoga de presionar con amenazas de excomunión para arrancar acusaciones y testimonios a los remisos en el delatar, y del sistema procesal sin garantías usado por igual en las aljamas de Castilla y de Aragón." 8. M. Gaibrois de Ballesteros, *Sancho IV de Castilla*, III (1928), no. 511. ←

9. A. Gimenez Soler, *Memorias de la R. Academia de Barcelona*, VIII, p. 47. Baer, *Studien zur Gesch. der Juden in Aragonien*, pp. 84–86. L. Klüpfel, *Verwaltungsgeschichte des Königreichs Aragon* (1915), p. 115 ff. See above, n. 6. ←

10. Fr. de Bofarull y Sans, *Los judíos en el territorio de Barcelona, reinado de Jaime I* (1910), Appendix no. CXLIV (Régné, no. 605). See also *REI*, XIX, 270–272 (Régné, nos. 356, 396). ←

11. See A. García Gallo, "Historia, derecho e historia del derecho, consideraciones en tomo a la Escuela de Hinojosa," *Anuario*, XXIII (1953), 5 ff. ←

12. See Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Straf recht*, pp. 142–150, 151. ←

13. A complete translation of the texts may be found in: *The Code of Maimonides (Mishneh Torah)*, published for Judaica Research at Yale university, vols. III and IX (1949, 1954). See also Shalom Albeek, "The Principles of Government in the Jewish Communities of Spain until the Thirteenth Century," *Zion* XXV (1960), 106 ff. ←

14. See also Abraham A. Neuman, *The Jews in Spain*, vol. I (1942), eh. VII. ←

15. *Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum*, collectio vol. XXIII, col. 715 ff. Henri Maisonneuve, *Etudes sur les origines de l'Inquisition* (Paris, 1960), pp. 287 ff. ←

16. See above ch. XIV, pp. 324 ff. and H. Beinart, *Conversos on Trial by the Inquisition*, pp. 89 ff, 106 ff. ←

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P R S T U V W Y Z

- Aaron Abdalhac, II 54, 464
 Aaron de na Clara, I 224 f., 240, 418, 428
 Aaron ibn Yahia (Abinafia), I 163, 165 f., 410, 412
 Abba Mari b. Moses b. Joseph (Astruc of Lunel), I 289–304 *passim*, 398, 442
 Abd-ar-Rahman III, I 28 f.
 Abencerraje family, II 336
 Abner of Burgos (Alfonso de Valadolid), I 280, 327–354, 357 f., 369, 373, 375, 390, 446 f.; II 142, 147, 160, 164, 171 f., 232, 284, 477, 484
 Abolfaçan (Abu-al-hasan), I 387 f.
 Abraham Abenxuxen : *see* Abraham ibn Shoshan
 Abraham Abulafia, I 228, 288, 438, 440
 Abraham (Abu Ishak) ibn Al-fakhar, I 397 f., 401
 Abraham Alfaquim, astronomer of Alfonso X of Castile, I 126
 Abraham Alfaquim, physician of Count Ramon Berenguer IV, I 55
 Abraham Alitien, II 386–389, 501
 Abraham Almosnino, II 297, 385
 Abraham Avengalel, I 410, 427
 Abraham ibn Azfora, I 224
 Abraham el-Barchilon, I 131 ff., 403
 Abraham Bedersi, I 119, 142, 162
 Abraham Bien venist (de la Cavalieria), II 317
 Abraham Bienveniste of Soria, II 250, 259–270, 314, 317, 487
 Abraham Bivach, II 295–298, 385, 387, 488 f.
 Abraham Cavi Xorta (Xavaxorta), I 394
 Abraham of Cologne, I 120
 Abraham ibn Daud, I 32, 77, 390, 395; II 227
 Abraham b. Eliezer Halevi, II 430, 500
 Abraham ibn Ezra, I 245, 344; II 193, 252
 Abraham ibn Hasdai, I 401
 Abraham bar Hiyya, I 54, 59, 66, 334, 391
 Abraham Isaac Halevi, II 106, 152, 156, 475, 504, 508
 Abraham b. Judah aben Lavi, I 400
 Abraham Maimuni, I 104, 106, 399 ff.
 Abraham aben Nahmias (Abenamias), I 410
 Abraham b. Nathan, of Lunel, I 397, 418
 Abraham b. Saadia, I 144
 Abraham Saba, II 342, 426, 477
 Abraham b. Samuel Lobel, I 398
 Abraham Seneor, II 270, 305, 308, 315 f., 341 f., 400 ff., 433 f., 436, 487, 491, 503, 510
 Abraham Shalom, II 246, 507
 Abraham ibn Shoshan, I 127, 132, 309, 318, 403, 444
 Abraham b. Solomon Arduziel, II 426, 499, 510, 512
 Abraham ibn Wakar, I 136 f., 182, 404
 Abraham Zacuto, I 396, 403, 418, 420; II 322, 492 f., 510, 512
 Abu Ibrahim (Avubrahim) ben Benvenisti, I 388, 390
 Abudarme family, II 366
 Abulafia family, I 91, 197; II 326; *see also* Abraham, Joseph b. Todros, Meir b. Todros, Todros b. Joseph, Todros b. Judah Abulafia
 Academies, Jewish, I 23, 26 f., 34, 97 f., 236, 382; II 38, 53, 262, 491 f.
 “Act of Faith,” II 327, 334 f., 343 f., 363, 368, 383, 420, 472
 Adelantados: *see* Mukademin
 Aegidius Albornoz (Don Gil), I 357
 Aggada, I 7, 11, 25, 96 f., 109, 150–154 *passim*, 240, 244 ff., 288, 304, 348, 373 f.; II 179–210 *passim*, 479–483 *passim*; *see also* Disputations; Talmud, attacks upon

- Aguilar de Campóo, I 366
 Alagon, I 140, 430
 Alazar family, II 58, 72; *see also* Moses b. Alazar
 Alazar Golluf, II 60, 84, 92 f., 159, 321, 465, 467, 476
 Albarracin, II 117, 381, 436
 Alcalá de Henares, I 52, 360, 387, 450; II 118, 260, 302, 319
 Alcañiz, I 421; II 59, 139, 170 f., 173, 200
 Alcantara, Order of, I 355; II 322
 Alcira, I 165
 Alcolea, I 210
 Alcolea de Cinca, II 83
 Alconstantini family, I 105, 143, 146, 242; *see also* Bahye, Moses, Solomon Alconstantini
 Alexander II, pope, I 47
 Alexandria, I 209, 427; II 7, 36 f., 158, 511
Alfaquim: *see* Court officials
 Alfaro, II 485
 Alfonso I of Aragon, I 52–55, 59, 387 f.
 Alfonso II of Aragon, I 57 f., 82, 89, 91, 138, 405
 Alfonso III of Aragon, I 174, 176, 215, 235, 239, 410, 415, 430; II 2
 Alfonso III of Leon, I 43, 385
 Alfonso IV of Aragon, I 326; II 14–18 *passim*
 Alfonso V of Aragon, II 121, 229 f., 244, 246, 248, 271
 Alfonso V of Portugal and Castile, II 302 ff., 319
 Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon, I 44, 49 ff., 58, 65, 67 f., 77, 89, 385, 389 f.
 Alfonso VII of Castile, I 51, 65, 71, 77, 80, 390
 Alfonso VIII of Castile, 165, 80, 92, 390, 393
 Alfonso IX of Leon, I 89, 386
 Alfonso X of Castile, I 111–130, 132, 135, 137, 180, 199, 214, 244, 257, 268, 277, 326, 356, 402 f., 416, 418, 437 f.; II 4, 6, 32
 Alfonso XI of Castile, I 314, 325, 327, 356–362 *passim*, 375, 377, 445, 447
 Alfonso de Aguilar, II 307 f., 311
 Alfonso Carrillo, II 348
 Alfonso de la Cavalleria, II 305 f., 321, 364, 371–379, 390, 434, 492, 498 f., 509
 Alfonso de Espina, II 283–292, 403 f., 486, 488, 500
 Alfonso Fernandez Samuel (Samuel b. Altaraz), II 275
 Alfonso de Oropesa, II 289 ff., 302
 Alfonso de Palencia, II 302–308 *passim*, 312, 323, 377, 439, 488, 490 f., 493, 512
 Alfonso de Quintanilla, II 305
 Alfonso Sánchez, II 370
 Alfonso de Spina, II 500
 Alfonso de Valladolid: *see* Abner of Burgos
 Algiers, II 46 f., 51, 54, 121, 133, 360, 511
 Alicante, I 114; II 4
Aljama: *see* Jewish community
 Almanzor, I 40
 Almería, I 31, 34 f.; II 432, 438, 511
 Almodovar del Campo, II 357
 Almohades, I 47, 65, 76 f., 89, 397
 Almoravides, I 44, 47, 49, 60–69 *passim*, 190
Almoxarife, 1115, 122, 124; *see also* Court officials; Fiscal administrators
 Alonso Cota, II 279
 Alonso Enríquez, II 400
 Alonso Franco, II 400–421 *passim*
 Alonso de Hojeda, II 324
 Alvar Gomez, II 304
 Alvaro de Luna, II 278 f., 282, 303
 Alvaro de Montalvan, II 344 f.
 Alvaro de la Torre, II, 303 f.
 Alvarus Pelagius, I 360
 Américo Castro, II 444 f., 456
 Ampurias, count of, II 107
 Amram Efrati, II 55, 76, 78, 80
 Andalusia, I 18, 23, 30 f., 47, 49, 60, 64, 66 f., 72, 76, 90, 111–115, 139, 190 ff., 195 ff., 232, 237, 308, 313, 361, 383, 392, 405, 419; II 94 f., 97, 273, 292, 306, 309, 326 ff., 359, 364, 380, 389, 397, 401; expulsion from, II 317, 320, 330 f., 381, 433, 501; Inquisition in, II 333, 358, 497
 Andreas Bertrandi, II 227 f., 484

- Andreas de Cabrera, II 305, 308, 315
- Andrés Bemáldez, I 425; II 327, 380, 439, 493, 509 ff.
- Anti-Semitism, I 6, 166 ff., 308; II 24, 95, 394–398, 425, 447, 513; *see also* Legislation, anti-Jewish; Massacres of 1391; literary, II 300 ff., 502; of political origin, I 32, 47, 89, 166 f., 171 f., 312, 328, 354–357, 364–367, 368 f.; II 85 f., 110 f., 224, 422 f.; *see also* Disputations; of religious origin, I 15, 101, 149, 159, 167 f., 173, 178, 369, 417 f.; II 7, 85, 88, 110, 166–169, 249, 493; *see also* *Conversos*, Christian attitude towards; Libels against Jews; Polemics
- Antonio de Ávila, II 391, 399 f.
- Antonio de Bardaxi, II 383
- Antonio de Montoro, II 310 f., 347
- Antonio de la Peña, II 340, 346, 418
- Anussim*: *see* *Conversos*
- Apostasy, of aristocrats and intellectuals, I 378; II 52, 130 f., 144 f., 211, 218 ff., 224, 231, 248, 436; motivations for, II 93 f., 144 f.
- Apostates, as against *conversos*, II 394 f., 507; as anti-Semites, I 59, 328–354, 357 f., 369, 373; II 94, 109, 132, 141–150, 171, 209, 214, 341 f.; *see also* Abner of Burgos; Hieronymus de Sancta Fide; Paulus de Sancta Maria; as state officials, I 378; II 211, 216; ideology of, I 330–354, 446 f.; II 239; legislation concerning, II 93; *see also* *Conversos*, regulations concerning
- ‘*Aqedat Yitzhak* (*Yitzhak*), I 395, 432; 11254, 486, 507
- Aracena, II 326
- Aragon, 131, 42 f., 51, 53 f., 69, 79 ff., 85, 87, 89, 91 f., 103, 105, 107, 111 f., 115, 118, 120 f., 129 f., 138–185, 186, 193, 195 f., 205 f., 212, 215–218, 231 f., 234 f., 282, 284, 294, 307, 309, 312, 314, 316, 326 f., 377 f., 387, 393, 401, 404, 410 f., 414–417, 420 f., 423 f., 426 f., 430, 435, 439, 442, 448; II 1–34, 45, 48, 53, 59, 61, 65, 69 ff., 74, 76, 80, 82, 84 ff., 92, 99–130, 134, 141, 155, 159 f., 169, 170 ff., 211, 231, 240, 244 ff., 295, 304 f., 312, 378, 432, 435, 447, 450 f., 453, 461, 466, 473, 476, 478; expulsion from, II 245, 322, 433, 510 f.; Inquisition in, I 128, 308; II 86 ff., 125, 321, 328, 333, 358–389
- Ardutiell family, II 317; *see also* Shemtob, Solomon b. Abraham Ardutiell
- Aristocracy, I 64, 90–96, 188 f., 197, 213, 221, 228, 237–242, 253, 261 ff., 266, 281, 283, 304, 311, 318, 371, 443; II 60, 84, 105, 248; *see also* Court officials; Jewish community, class conflict in; social structure
- Aristotle, I 98, 274, 377; II 138, 146 f., 163, 255, 320, 486
- Amaldo de Villanova, I 278 f., 418, 434; 118, 460
- Arnold de Segarra, I 156, 161
- Aron haCohen, II 51
- Artisans, I 43 ff., 48, 79, 179 f., 196 ff., 201 f., 205, 207, 210, 244, 311, 313, 351, 361, 386, 422–426 *passim*; II 16, 30, 32, 34, 37, 44, 49, 55 ff., 71 f., 76, 86, 105, 107, 168, 224, 231, 240 f., 247 f., 299, 321, 344, 347, 350, 353 ff., 381 f., 411, 424, 463 f., 466, 468, 470, 472, 496, 511; *see also* Yuce Franco
- Ascandran family, I 209, 427
- Asher Lemle, II 496
- Asher b. Yehiel (*RASH*), I 201 f., 251, 297–301, 316–325, 358, 372, 374, 395, 417, 422 ff., 444 f.; II 10, 97, 451 f., 476, 492
- Astorga, II 399, 402–421 *passim*, 504
- Astronomers, Jewish, I 31, 52, 54, 112, 120, 126, 241, 448; II 18, 32, 48, 52, 54, 103, 159, 317, 322, 462 f., 469, 475, 492
- Astruc Biona, II 38 f.
- Astruc Bonafed, II 216
- Astruc Crespín, II 11
- Astruc Cresques of Solsona, II 136
- Astruc Halevi, II 173, 177, 179 f., 185, 197–210 *passim*, 217, 226, 228
- Astruc Haninai, II 374
- Astruc Hasdai, II 60, 465

- Astruc of Lunel: *see* Abba Mari b. Moses b. Joseph
- Astruc de Piera, II 87
- Astruc Rimoch (Franciscus de Sant Jordi), II 131, 218 ff., 484, 500
- Astruch Çatorra, II 470
- Astrug Bonsenyor, I 139, 158, 405; II 6
- Astrug de Porta, 1156 f., 407
- Astrug Ravaya, I 164, 409
- Augustine, I 7, 12, 15, 27, 59, 74, 98, 101, 331, 392, 447
- Auto-da-fé*: *see* "Act of Faith"
- Autonomy of Jewish community, I 23, 118 f., 175, 179, 217 ff., 305; II 247; limitation of, I 143 f., 180; II 33, 44 f., 129 f., 168 f., 246, 269, 313, 466; *see also* Jewish communities, small
- Averroism, I 240, 263, 290, 360; II 52, 137 f., 143 ff., 148, 150, 163 f., 224, 235, 253–259, 273 f., 282, 378
- Avignon, II 27, 114, 141, 151, 155, 172
- Avila, I 107, 126, 191 f., 198, 244, 278–281, 288, 365, 419 f.; II 391, 401, 402–421 *passim*, 503, 505
- '*Avodath ha-Kodesh*', II 427 ff., 477, 508
- Ayala, Pedro Lopez de, I 363, 366, 368, 375, 418, 448 ff.
- Ayllon, I 280
- Aynsa, II 112
- Ba'al ha-Maor, II 391
- Bachie Alconstantini, II 5
- Badajoz, 131
- Badge, Jewish: *see* Clothing, Jewish
- Badis, king of Granada, I 33 ff.
- Bahiel (possibly Alconstantini), physician, II 5, 460
- Bahye (Bachie) Alconstantini, I 105, 138 ff., 222, 399, 404 f.; II 5
- Bahye b. Asher, I 229, 417, 429, 433
- Bailiffs, Jewish, I 55, 57 f., 136, 144, 163, 172, 211, 223, 229, 239, 410, 414; II 3; *see also* Fiscal administrators, Jewish; Judah de la Cavalleria
- Balaguer, I 54, 170, 412; II 115, 212, 471
- Balearic islands, I 31, 111, 404; II 8, 28, 46, 102, 121
- Barbastro, I 55, 142, 426; II 15, 112
- Barcelona, I 24, 31, 39, 53–57, 85, 146, 164, 170, 173, 196, 209 f., 239 f., 388, 390, 405 f., 410, 414, 416, 418, 426 f., 435, 440; II 5 ff., 9, 11, 25, 26 ff., 59, 74, 84–87 *passim*, 89 f., 94, 99, 103 ff., 109, 116 f., 120 f., 125, 158, 245, 321, 333, 359, 379, 438, 468 f., 471, 497, 511; disputation of, I 152–162, 167, 185, 247 f., 281, 286, 439; II 179; *herem* of, I, 290–304 *passim*, 442 f.; Inquisition in, II 333, 378, 381–384, 499 f.; Jewish community, I 40 ff., 79, 81 f., 90 f., 94 f., 105, 140, 143 f., 194, 216 f., 225 ff., 282 f., 398, 421, 428, 431; II 21–24, 34, 35–44, 48, 54, 65–68, 70, 119 ff., 126, 462, 466; Jewish quarter, I 79, 194, 394; II 35 f., 119
- Beaucaire, I 119, 127
- Bedin (Albedin)*, I 212, 214, 221, 234
- Bejar, II 452
- Belshom Ephraim, II 52, 463
- Ben Adoba family, of Seville, II 326
- Ben Shoshan family, of Seville, II 326
- Benedict XIII, anti-pope, II, 141, 155, 167, 171–243 *passim*, 393, 476
- Benedictine Order, I 45, 59, 274, 438
- Benito García, II 399, 403–421 *passim*, 504 ff.
- Benvenist de la Cavalleria, II 59 f., 64, 72, 84, 135, 137, 139, 171, 173, 271, 464
- Benvenist b. Labi de la Cavalleria, II 211
- Benveniste (Bene venisti) family, I 91, 227, 397; II 72; *see also* Samuel, Sheshet b. Isaac Benveniste
- Benveniste ibn Benveniste, II 6
- Benveniste Izmel, II 5
- Benveniste de Porta, I 146, 156 f., 161, 169, 282, 407
- Berenguer de Cruilles, II 107
- Berga, II 254
- Bernard Gui, II 8, 15, 460

- Bernard Metge, II 103, 469
 Bernardo de Podio Certoso, II 12
 Bertran de Born, I 89
 Bertrand du Guesclin, I 365
Berurei 'averot: see Berurim;
 Criminal jurisdiction of Jewish community
Berurim, I 223–227, 231, 234, 429;
 II 41, 45, 51, 66 ff., 451; *see also*
 Judges
 Besant family, II 366
 Biel, II 7 f.
 Blanca, infanta, I 329
 Blasphemers, I 323 f.; II 7 f., 52 f.,
 88
 Blood libels, I 116, 149; II 6 f., 27,
 245, 249, 287 f., 391, 398–423,
 488, 503, 506
 Bodo, I 24
 Bonafos de la Cavalleria: *see* Fer-
 nando de la Cavalleria
 Bonafos Saltell, I 443
 Bonafos Vidal, I 292 f., 442
 Bonastruc Desmaestre, II 176 f.,
 212, 479
 Bonastruc de Porta: *see* Na(c)h-
 manides
 Bonet Bonjorn, II 150 f., 154 f.,
 474
 Bonjudah Yehasal Hakashlari, II
 173
 Bonjuha Gracia, II 470
Book of Knowledge, I 103, 105,
 109, 400 f.
Book of Wondrous Wisdom, I 278
 Borja, I 426
 Bragança, duke of, II 318
 Briviesca, I 365, 420
 Buitrago, II 247, 485
 Burgos, 143, 51, 58, 62, 80, 191 f.,
 214, 234, 244, 280, 307, 331, 365
 f., 375 f., 384, 389, 400, 419 f.,
 438; II 72, 76, 97 f., 117, 139 ff.,
 144, 160, 162, 166, 247, 327, 397,
 468, 473 f., 485, 493, 500
 Ça (Isaac) Franco, II 404–421 *pas-
 sim*, 503
 Cabalism, I 99, 129, 198 f., 240,
 243–250, 261–270, 272 f., 283,
 296, 331, 335, 337, 343, 369–373,
 377, 399, 403, 422, 433, 438, 446;
 II 13 f., 19, 72, 235, 252, 276, 317,
 342, 426–431, 443, 477, 492, 508
 Cabrera, viscount of, II 107
 Çac Alfaquim: *see* Isaac ibn Wakar
 Çag de la Maleha, I 124–130, 257
 Calahorra, I 394, 450
 Calatayud, I 105, 143, 168, 193,
 205, 218, 387 f., 395, 406, 410,
 421; II 12 f., 53, 64, 120, 254, 466
 Calatrava, I 77, 80, 421
Callum: see Jewish quarter
 Caloña, I 88, 234; II 446; *see also*
 Wergild
 Cap family, I 227; *see also* Isaac b.
 Samuel Cap
 Capital punishment, I 143, 232 f.,
 284 f., 315 f., 323 f.; II 79, 81,
 491; *see also* Criminal jurisdic-
 tion of Jewish community; In-
 formers
 Caravida Çaporta, II 470
 Carmona, I 114, 124; II 311
 Caro family, II 317
 Carrion, I 191
 Cartagena, I 427; II 316, 511
 Cartographers, Jewish, II 32, 48,
 52, 92, 103, 469
 Caspe, II 170
 Castellon, II 107
 Castellon de la Plana, I 195
 Castile, I 31, 42 f., 50 f., 53, 60, 62,
 65, 67, 77, 80, 83, 85, 87, 91, 95,
 100, 103, 111–137, 143, 148, 174–
 180 *passim*, 186, 190–193, 195–198
passim, 203, 205, 212–217, 223,
 232, 234, 239, 244, 260, 284, 294,
 306–378, 391, 396 f., 401, 404, 410,
 414–419 *passim*, 422 ff., 427 ff.,
 435, 438, 444, 448 ff.; II 1, 4, 8, 16,
 71, 76, 79, 85 f., 93, 95–99, 100, 110
 f., 117 ff., 134, 141 f., 159, 161, 166
 f., 169, 239, 244, 246–254, 259–270,
 277 f., 289 f., 305 f., 309, 312, 315,
 318, 378, 397, 432 f., 440, 446, 450,
 467, 471, 473, 475 f.; Edicts of
 1412, II 166–169, 229, 241, 249,
 323, 325; expulsion from, II 169,
 246 f., 433, 510 f.; Inquisition in,
 II 277, 290 ff., 320, 328–358, 367,
 422 f., 493, 496, 500
 Castrojeriz, I 43, 384
 Catalina, queen of Castile, II 166

- Catalonia, I 18, 40 f., 81, 91, 105, 112, 140, 142 f., 146, 159, 164, 166, 169 f., 174, 181, 194 ff., 209, 211, 215, 217, 226, 231 f., 254, 279, 286, 312, 384, 405 ff., 413, 415 ff., 421, 426, 436, 442; II 12, 19, 21, 25 f., 36, 41, 44, 53, 59, 72, 75, 89, 99, 103, 108–111, 117, 122 f., 134, 151, 156, 159, 171, 245, 254, 276, 371, 378, 381, 383, 496, 500
- Catholic monarchs, II 93, 278, 284, 300–323, 324 f., 328 f., 331, 333, 359, 371, 376, 378, 384, 389, 432, 433 ff., 440 f., 490, 493, 500 ff.
- Cavaller family, II 383 f.
- Cavalleria, de la, family, II 30, 58, 72, 372, 464 f.; *see also* Alfonso, Benvenist, Fernando, Judah, Pedro, Orovida, Solomon, Vidal de la Cavalleria
- Cella, II 365 f.
- Cervera, I 210; II 123, 245 f., 384, 467
- Charles III of Navarre, II 118, 126
- Charles IV of Navarre, II 17
- Charles the Bald, emperor, I 39
- Charters of privilege: *see* Privileges
- Chillon, II 357
- Chinillo family, II 321
- Chosen people concept, I 3, 6, 74 ff., 246, 392; II 153, 186, 258, 428
- Christian-Jewish personal relationships, I 12, 27, 280 ff.; II 249 ff., 266, 322
- Christopher Columbus, II 322
- Church schism, II 118, 141, 151, 154, 172
- Church-state relations, II 7, 10–13, 26 f., 33, 97 f., 329 f.; *see also* Inquisition, papal intervention in, protests against
- Cid, El, I 52, 58, 80, 386–389 *passim*
- Cidellus: *see* Joseph Ferrizuel
- Cifuentes, II 169
- Cisa, I 231; II 21, 63, 126
- Cisneros, II 160
- Ciudad Real, II 280, 312, 334–337, 347, 357
- Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, II 444–448, 456
- Clement IV, pope, I 158 f.
- Clement V, pope, I 309, 434
- Clement VI, pope, I 359; II 27
- Clement VII, pope, II 114
- Clermont, I 49
- Clothing, Jewish, I 101, 116, 160, 173, 180 f., 235, 310; II 6, 125, 168, 249, 253, 269, 302, 478
- Cluny, I 49
- Collecta*, I 217
- Collioure, II 18
- Colonization policy, Jews in, I 47, 78, 84, 112–115, 139 f., 146, 165 f., 171, 175, 177, 195, 404 f., 412; II 1, 4, 432
- Commerce: *see* Maritime commerce; Merchants
- Commissioner for Jewish Affairs, I 166; II 25
- Confiscation of Jewish property, I 22, 41, 44, 124, 140, 176, 387; II 4, 10 f., 13, 169, 326, 333, 343 f., 364, 434, 441, 495
- Constance, II 172, 174, 225
- Constantinople, II 292, 362, 511
- Consulta-de-fé*, II 418, 420
- Conversos*, I 16, 19 f., 178; II 9–14 *passim*, 130–133, 210 f., 372, 435 f., 468 ff., 509 ff.; apologia of, II 238 f.; as against apostates, II 394 f., 507; as state officials, II 246, 274 f., 315–322, 383 f., 389, 487, 492; *see also* Alfonso de la Cavalleria; Christian attitude towards, I 20 f., 101, 161, 385 f.; II 9–14, 125, 258, 274, 277–292, 299, 300–309, 348, 389 f., 487; communities, II 336 f., 367, 381; emigration of, II 52, 125, 158–162, 286, 292–299 *passim*, 310, 326, 338, 359 f., 362, 381, 383, 475 f., 510 f.; forced conversion opposed, II 108 f., 112, 124 f., 230; in Christian religious orders, II 286, 338, 353 f., 495; Jewish attitude towards, I 161, 408; II 9, 12, 14, 258, 317, 509; regulations concerning, I 20 f.; n 52, 91, 102 f., 109, 125 f., 133, 280; retain Jewish practices, I 161; II 231, 270–277, 285, 293, 310 f., 325–337, 345 f., 351, 353–356, 359, 360 ff., 366 f., 368 ff., 372, 383 f., 415, 424, 490 f., 493 f.,

- 497; revert to Judaism, II 9 f., 295–299, 384–388, 432, 472
- Cordova, I 22 ff., 29, 30–33, 40, 44, 65, 111–114 *passim*, 136, 191, 197, 213, 311, 321, 323, 355, 363; II 97, 307–310 *passim*, 327, 338, 347 f., 354, 365, 371; Inquisition in, II 312, 330, 441
- Corfu, II 160
- Cortes, I 118, 131, 135 f., 148, 172 f., 201, 308, 310 f., 314, 326, 362, 365 f., 375 f., 444, 451; II 3, 27, 85, 323, 325, 359, 459, 466
- Council of the Estates of Aragon, II 59, 363
- Council of Thirty, Barcelona, I 227 f., 304; II 21–24, 37, 42 f., 463
- Court officials, Jewish, I 23, 28–36, 47 f., 50 f., 55, 64, 92, 112 f., 120–126, 130–136, 138 ff., 144–147, 162–167, 170 ff., 174, 179 f., 197, 235, 243, 307 ff., 325 ff., 351, 362 ff., 365, 377, 413; II 1, 4 ff., 92 f., 118, 167 ff., 241 f., 249 f., 315–322, 440, 466; influence fate of Jewish communities, I 28, 31, 72, 154, 171, 308, 358 ff.; *see also* Fiscal administrators
- Craftsmen: *see* Artisans
- Crescas, Hasdai: *see* Hasdai Crescas
- Crescas Vidal, I 292 ff., 442
- Cresques, physician, II 246
- Cresques Abraham, II 52, 464
- Cresques Haninai, II 375
- Cresques Judah Perfet, II 76
- Cresques Solomon, II 21, 26 ff., 37
- Cresques de Vivers, II 92, 467
- Criminal jurisdiction of Jewish community, I 87 f., 118 f., 143, 211, 227, 231–235, 284, 315 f., 375 f., 429; II 2 f., 33, 41, 51, 64–70, 79–83, 168 f., 246, 322 f., 341, 444–456, 463, 494; *see also* Informers; Juridical relations between Jews and Christians
- Cuellar, II 251, 485 f.
- Cuenca, I 191, 202, 364; II 97
- Çulema aben Arroyo, II 118
- Daroca, I 235, 395; II 116, 173, 230 f., 370
- David Abudarham, I 214
- David ibn Aldaian, I 82, 394
- David Alfacar, II 316
- David Bonjorn (Yomtov) de Barrio (del Barri), II 18
- David Kamhi, I 95, 107 ff., 398, 400 ff.; II 13
- David Mascarán, I 176, 242, 414 f., 440
- David of Narbonne, I 392
- David Negro, I 377
- David de Perejon, II 412, 415
- David b. Saul, I 102
- David b. Shoeb, II 466
- Dayyanim*: *see* Judges
- Denia, I 31, 195
- De Porta: *see* Astrug, Benveniste, Bonastrug, Vidalon de Porta
- Derekh Emunah*, II 296 f.
- Diaspora, I 2–16 *passim*, 26 ff., 70–73, 100, 232, 247 f., 352, 433; II 151, 456
- Diego de Alva, II 486
- Diego Arias de Ávila, II 282 f., 300, 396 f., 488
- Diego de Marchena, II 338
- Diplomats, Jewish, I 29, 46, 54, 112, 120, 122 ff., 139, 174, 309, 367, 377, 390, 410, 450; II 5, 24, 30, 58, 140, 211, 322, 491
- Disputations, between Christians and Jews, I 14, 128, 150–162, 183 ff., 357, 359, 484; of Barcelona, I 152–162, 167, 185, 247 f., 281, 286, 439; II 179; of Tortosa, II 151, 160, 170–232, 248, 276, 322, 476, 478–483
- Domestic relations, I 172, 236, 246, 250, 254–257, 259 f., 313, 316, 318–321, 372, 406, 424, 432, 434–437, 451; II 51, 62, 66, 79 f., 133, 266, 466
- Dominicans, I 109, 128, 147, 150–162 *passim*, 167, 175, 188, 274, 281, 331, 400 f., 414; II 7, 86, 172, 181 f., 324 f., 331, 340, 364, 493, 500
- Dunash ibn Labrat, I 29
- Ecija, I 124; II 95, 97, 117
- Economic structure of Jewish community, I 37, 43 f., 47, 79–85,

- 179 f., 197–212, 235, 311 ff.; II 29, 36 f., 48, 247, 250 f., 509; *see also* Jewish community, social structure; Occupations
- “Edict of Grace,” II 328, 331, 334, 339, 351, 359, 363, 366, 390, 454
- Edicts of 1412, II 166–169, 229, 241, 249, 323, 325
- Education, I 236 f., 431 f.; II 72, 261 f.; of *conversos*, II 362; opposition to secular, I 292–305, 317, 442 f.; II 235 f., 489
- Egea, I 142, 412
- Elche, I 139, 404 f.; 114
- Eleazar (Abenalazar) family, I 91, 224, 388, 390, 397, 405; *see also* Alazar family; Meir aben Eleazar
- Eleazar ibn Ardut, II 24, 28
- Eleazar ha-Rokeah, I 244
- Eleazar of Saragossa, I 54 f.
- Eliahu Capsali, II 305, 434, 490, 509 f 512
- Eliahu del Medigo, II 440
- Elienor Cifuentes, II 292, 294
- Eliezer Alitien, II 386
- Elvira, I 22
- England, I 328, 366; II 29, 111, 141, 473; expulsion from, I 129, 190, 360; II 288 f., 437, 460, 488
- Enrique de Villena (Maestre de Calatrava), II 162, 476 f.
- Enriquez de Castillo, II 290
- “Epistle of Blasphemies” (*Iggereth ha-Harafoth*), I 335 f., 343, 348
- Epistle to Yemen*, I 96
- Eretz Yisrael*: *see* Palestine
- Ervig, I 21
- Esplugues, G. R., II 360, 496
- Estella, I 42, 62, 83 f., 193, 384, 393, 420, 431
- ‘*Etza*, I 224, 226 f., 428; *see also* Jewish community, structure of
- Even Bo#han*, I 427, 443; II 11, 19, 21, 461
- Explanatio Symboli Apostolorum*, I 167
- Expulsion of Jews, I 2, 178; II 381, 431 ff., 471, 508–513; economic consequences, II 333, 441; Edict of, II 372, 381, 433 ff., 439, 508 f., 512; from Andalusia, II 317, 320, 330 f., 381, 433, 501; from Aragon, II 245, 322, 510 f.; from Castile, II 169, 246 f., 433, 510 f.; from England, 1129, 190, 360; II 288 f., 437, 460, 488; from France, I 101, 129, 149; II 8 f., 19, 437, 460; from Germany, II 437; from Navarre, II 510; from Saragossa, II 372, 374, 381, 389
- Extremadura, II 397
- Ezer ha-Dath*, I 358
- Ezer ha-Emunah*, 1374 f., 451
- Falaquera family, I 425; *see also* Joseph, Nathan, Shem Tob Falaquera
- Faquim family, II 50; *see also* Jucef, Moses Faquim
- Fariza, I 426
- Farmers, Jewish, I 43 ff., 79, 197 f., 204 f., 311, 361, 426; II 30; *see also* Land ownership
- Faro, count of, II, 318
- Felipe, infante, I 325 f.
- Ferdinand I of Aragon, II 166, 170, 172, 211, 226, 232
- Ferdinand III of Castile, I 111 f., 116, 118, 122
- Ferdinand IV of Castile, I 308, 310, 405; II 452
- Ferdinand the Catholic : *see* Catholic monarchs
- Fernando Alfonso, II 350
- Fernando de Antequera: *see* Ferdinand I of Aragon
- Fernando (Bonafos) de la Cavalleria, II 211 f., 276, 483
- Fernando González Husillo, II 350
- Fernando Husillo, II 351
- Fernando de Madrid, II 351
- Fernando Martinez, I 369
- Fernando Nuñez Coronel: *see* Abraham Seneor
- Fernando Pérez Coronel: *see* Meir Melamed
- Fernando de la Plaza, II 290
- Fernando del Pulgar, II 493 ff.
- Fernando de Rojas, II 345, 495
- Fernando de Santo Domingo, II 391, 402–421 *passim*, 502, 505
- Fernando de la Torre, II 303 f., 490
- Ferrand Alvarez de la Torre, II 118

- Ferrant Martinez, II 95 ff.
 Ferrer Halevi : *see* Zerahia Halevi
 Ferrer b. Masut ibn Janah, II 40
 Ferrer Saladin: *see* Zerahia Halevi
 Financiers, I 28, 197, 210, 228, 281, 361; II 32; *see also* Fiscal administrators; Moneylending; Tax farming
 Fiscal administrators, I 119–124, 127 f., 132 f., 136, 144–147, 164 ff., 170 f., 174, 177, 179 f., 308, 367, 377, 412; II 29 f., 118, 318 f.
 Flagellants, II 166, 230; *see also* Vincent Ferrer
 Flanders, II 29, 286, 310, 474
Fortalitium Fidei, II 282–292, 397, 403, 488, 503
 Fraga, I 210, 422; II 123 f., 131, 472
 France, I 139, 244, 304, 328; II 8, 10 f., 18, 52, 140 f., 381, 383, 438, 473; anti-Semitic policies, I 142, 149 ff.; II 15 f., 19, 111, 168, 437, 454, 460, 488; expulsion from, I 101, 129, 149; II 8 f., 19, 437, 460; Inquisition in, II 8, 15, 454; Jewish community, I 97 f., 102–110 *passim*, 149 ff., 196, 241, 244, 290–300, 372 f., 400, 442
 Francese Eximeniç, II 86, 93, 467
 Francisco d'Aranda, II 114
 Francis of Assisi, I 98, 267–271, 437
 Franciscans, I 98, 109, 128, 151 ff., 156, 158, 188, 199, 270, 274, 278 f., 400 f.; II 8, 13, 57, 86, 252 f., 283, 289 f., 436, 500; *see also* Mendicant friars
 Francisco de Sancta Fé, II 370 f., 498
 Francisco de Toledo, II 303
 Franciscus de Sant Jordi: *see* Astruc Rimoch
 Franco family, II 399, 401–421 *passim*
 Fromista, II 285
 Frontera, La, I 132, 327
Fueros, I 86–90 *passim*, 117, 315; II 445, 447
 Funes, I 80, 393
 Gabriel-Israel, II 316
 Gabriel Sánchez, II 93, 321, 364, 370 f., 373, 375 f., 492, 498
 “Gaon of Castile,” II 270
 Garci Alonso, II 474
 García Franco, II 401, 410
 Germany, I 98, 196, 201, 236, 244, 251, 266, 291, 316 f., 324, 372, 442, 444; II 10, 85, 111, 168; expulsion from, II 437
 Gerona, I 55, 82, 95, 102, 140, 146, 148, 157 f., 164, 167, 175, 194, 209, 408, 415, 421, 436, 440; II 18, 88, 90, 106 f., 109, 122, 152, 156, 173, 176, 245, 271 f., 460, 472, 479, 484; Council of, 142; II 44 ff.
 Gershom, Rabbenu, I 226, 254 f., 291, 432, 435
 Gibraltar, I 355; II 309 f.
 Gomez Manrique, II 339
 Gonzalo Martinez, I 354–359 *passim*
 Gonzalvo de Cordova, II 293
 Granada, I 22 f., 31–36 *passim*, 60 f., 63, 77, 124, 132, 186, 309, 327, 355, 366 f., 410 f., 450; II 5, 16, 317, 319, 330, 333, 343, 349, 431 ff., 508
 Gregory VII, pope, I 50
 Gregory IX, pope, I 101, 147, 150, 158; II 86, 224
 Gregory X, pope, I 119
 Guadalajara, I 68, 92, 192, 199, 244, 377, 404, 420, 422, 451; II 72, 76, 252, 291, 319, 355, 485, 492
 Guadalupe, II 337 f., 353
 Guicciardini, II 440
Guide for the Perplexed, I 103, 105–110, 184, 269, 302 f., 339, 400 f., 443, 449; II 194, 466, 486
 Guillen Sanchez, II 370
 Haburah, I 222
Halakhah: *see* Talmud
 Halevi family, I 91; II 72, 98, 473; *see also* Abraham Isaac, Astruc, Joseph b. Abraham Isaac, Solomon, Zerahia Halevi
Ha-Mebakesh, I 203 f., 425
 Haro, I 200 f., 393; II 249, 485
 Hasdai Crescas, I 195, 446; II 21, 30, 37, 38–41 *passim*, 44, 53, 60, 64, 70, 73, 77–85, 91 ff., 96, 104 ff., 106, 113–116, 120, 126–130, 135, 138, 142, 151, 155, 159–166, 173, 208 ff., 217, 232, 271, 466, 469 ff., 475 ff., 483

- Hasdai ibn Shaprut, I 16, 29 f., 46, 382 f.
- Haskamoth*: see *Takkanoth*
- Hayyim Galipapa, II 75, 465
- Hayyim ibn Musa, II 254, 260, 487
- Hayyim Rimoch, II 472
- Hayyim b. Shem Tob Menir, I 221
- Hazut Qashah*, II 254, 256
- Hebrew, culture, I 2, 28 ff., 37 f., 188 f., 196, 211, 237; II 58, 60, 72; language, I 27, 184; II 60, 151; literature, I 215; II 34, 426, 442; see also Poetry, poets, Hebrew; printing, II 345 f., 492, 495
- Henry I of Castile, I 80
- Henry II of Castile (of Trastámara), I 364–367, 375–378, 449 f.
- Henry III of Castile, II 117 f., 166, 288, 471
- Henry IV of Castile, II 250, 270, 276, 282 f., 290, 300–306 *passim*, 312, 348, 440, 490 f.
- Hernandad, II, 315 f., 323
- Herrera, II 356, 496
- Hibbur ha-Meshiha we-ha-Tishboret*, I 54, 67
- Hieronymus de Sancta Fide, II 160, 171, 175–229 *passim*, 284, 479–483; see also Joshua Halorki
- Hillel of Verona, I 401 f.
- Hita, II 247, 485
- “Holy Child of La Guardia”: see La Guardia trial
- Holy Land: see Palestine
- Hospitaler, Order of Knights, I 85, 210
- Huesca, I 59, 82 f., 93 f., 105, 140, 162, 168, 193, 205 f., 208, 388, 397, 400, 405, 416, 421, 425, 431; II 7, 15, 24 f., 69, 89, 112, 295–299, 384–389, 461, 509
- Hugo Candidus, I 42
- Ibn ‘Abbas, I 33 f.
- Ibn Alfakhar family, I 91, 197; see also Abraham, Joseph ibn Alfakhar
- Ibn Azfora family, I 425; see also Abraham ibn Azfora
- Ibn Daud family, I 224; see also Abraham, Johanan ibn Daud
- Ibn Ezra family, I 91, 197; see also Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Judah, Moses ibn Ezra
- Ibn Hazm, I 32, 281
- Ibn Shoshan family of Toledo, I 91, 197; II 317; see also Abraham, Joseph, Meir ibn Shoshan
- Ibn Zadok family, I 91, 197; see also Isaac, Solomon ibn Zadok
- Ibn Zarzar, I 450
- Iggereth ha-Musar*, I 425; II 239–242, 484
- Informers, I 168 ff., 221, 225, 252, 284 ff., 354, 400 ff., 425, 445, 450; II 2 f., 12, 27, 52 ff., 64, 67 ff., 81 f., 91, 376 f., 384, 445, 449, 451, 456, 466, 468; jurisdiction over, I 231–234, 324 f., 407; II 263–266, 270, 452; legislation concerning, I 11, 161 f., 315; II 453
- Innocent III, pope, I 101, 115, 147
- Innocent IV, pope, I 116, 151
- Innocent VIII, pope, II 389 f.
- Inquisition, I 127 f., 147, 157 f., 240; II 7–14 *passim*, 86 ff., 286, 302, 304, 440 f., 493–506; as a political institution, II 333 ff., 378, 423, 455 f.; concerned with *conversos*, I 158 f.; II 9 ff., 86, 88, 125 f., 169, 276 f., 282, 291, 312, 324–423, 433, 496; in Andalusia, II 333, 358, 497; in Aragon, I 128, 308; II 86 ff., 125, 321, 328, 333, 358–389, 417, 496, 499; in Barcelona, II 333, 378, 381–384, 499 f.; in Burgos, II 500; in Castile, I 128; II 277, 290 ff., 320, 325, 328–358, 367, 422 f., 493, 496, 500; in Ciudad Real, II 334–337; in Cordova, II 312, 330, 441; in France, II 8, 15, 434, 454; in Huesca, II 384–389, 461; in Lerida, II 499; in Saragossa, II 13 f., 363 f., 367–381, 389, 435; in Segovia, II 399, 401; in Seville, II 317, 324–328, 333, 345, 352, 493; in Teruel, II 364–367, 499; in Toledo, II 291, 338 ff., 343–348, 380, 389, 399, 416, 422, 494 f., 499 f.; in Valencia, II 291 f., 328 ff., 358–363, 380, 402, 497, 508; intervenes in internal Jewish affairs, I 109 f.; II 7 f., 86 f., 184; Jewish resist-

- ance to, II 326, 367 f., 494; Jewish witnesses before, II 339 f., 355 f., 393; orders expulsion of Jews, II 330 f., 381, 423, 434; origins of, II 15 f., 444–456; papal intervention in, II 329 f., 376, 389 f.; posthumous trials, II 350 f.; procedures of, I 233; II 286, 328–332, 445, 447 f., 454 f.; protests against, II 332, 364 f., 368, 381 f., 453, 500
- Interpreters: *see* Translators
- Isaac (Çag) Abendino (Avendino), II 159, 476
- Isaac Abohab, II 248, 319, 426, 485, 491 f.
- Isaac Abravanel, I 395; II 174, 291, 318 ff., 426, 433 f., 437, 439, 442, 479, 492, 507, 509, 512
- Isaac ibn Açfora, II 61 f., 465
- Isaac Alfasi, I 383
- Isaac Alhadib, II 76, 465
- Isaac 'Arama, I 395, 432; II 254–258, 286, 426, 486, 488, 507
- Isaac Arrondi, II 385
- Isaac Bivach, II 297, 385–389
- Isaac Bonafos Shealtiel, II 219
- Isaac Canpanton, II 270, 487
- Isaac Castellon, II 475
- Isaac Chacon of Toledo, II 430
- Isaac ibn Cid, I 120
- Isaac Cocumbriel, II 385
- Isaac ibn Ezra, I 60, 390
- Isaac Franco: *see* Ça Franco
- Isaac Golluf: *see* Juan Sánchez de Calatayud
- Isaac Israeli, II 476
- Isaac ibn Janah, I 141
- Isaac ibn Kamaniel, I 389 f.
- Isaac de Leon, II 314, 317, 374–377, 426, 491 f.
- Isaac b. Moshe Halevi: *see* Profet Duran
- Isaac Nifoci, II 52, 103, 159, 463, 469, 475
- Isaac Policar (Pollegar), I 331 f., 335 f., 343, 348, 357, 446
- Isaac ibn Sahula, I 92, 199 f., 244, 422, 436 f.
- Isaac b. Samuel Cap, I 209, 427, 443
- Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet (RIBaSH), I 372, 377, 409, 421, 428, 432, 444; II 23, 38 f., 42, 51, 54 f., 60–64, 73–83, 100, 105, 139 f., 219, 453, 461–473 *passim*, 478, 507
- Isaac b. Solomon b. Abraham ibn Adret, I 443
- Isaac b. Todros, I 228, 443
- Isaac b. Vidal de Tolosa, II 83
- Isaac ibn Wakar (Çac Alfaquim), I 136 f., 182, 192, 404, 420, 444; II 4, 444, 459
- Isaac ibn Zadok: *see* Çag de la Maleha
- Isaac Zayet, II 374 f.
- Isabella the Catholic: *see* Catholic monarchs
- Ishmael de Portella, I 216, 414
- Isidore of Seville, I 21
- Israel b. Joseph al-Nakawa (An-nacava), I 374, 451
- Israel b. Joseph Israeli, I 318 f.
- Italy, II 310, 326, 346, 348, 438, 440 f., 511
- Jaca, I 42, 234, 384, 429; II 15, 112
- Jacob b. Asher b. Yehiel, I 316, 374, 434; II 391
- Jacob Cidaryo, II 275
- Jacob ben Crisp, II 451
- Jacob b. David Provenzali, I 448
- Jacob Gikatilia, I 192 f., 420
- Jacob Hazan, II 372 ff.
- Jacob b. Makhir, I 296, 304, 434
- Jacob ibn Nuñez, II 270, 487
- Jacob b. Sh'altiel, I 443
- Jacob of Venice, I 152, 408
- Jaen, I 111, 366
- Jaime de Casafranca, II 383
- Jaime Ferrer, II 361 f.
- Jaime de Montesa, II 368 ff., 498
- James I of Aragon (the Conqueror), I 105, 111, 128, 138–162 *passim*, 163, 166 f., 169, 173, 181, 195, 215 f., 218, 222 f., 398, 400–408 *passim*, 410, 416, 435, 442; II 6 f., 30, 33, 58, 92, 172, 447
- James II of Aragon, I 174, 185, 215, 230, 282, 285, 410, 417, 440; II 1–17, 21, 30, 67, 460 f.
- Jativa, I 111, 139, 141, 159, 165, 195, 235, 405, 431; II 133, 427, 496 f., 508

- Jerez de la Frontera, I 113 f., 119 f., 191, 419; II 317, 326, 330 f., 468, 494
- Jewish community, class conflict in, I 65, 93, 105, 188 f., 213, 222–231, 236–242, 243, 263–266, 273, 307, 369–373, 429; II 21, 31, 33 f., 41 f., 71, 76, 248 f.; relations with municipalities, I 179 f.; II 249; religious conflicts in, I 3, 90–110, 211, 236–242; II 34, 41, 71 ff.; *see also* Philosophy, conflict with religion; Religion, reforms in; small communities, I 210 f., 216 f.; II 31, 44, 64, 269; social structure of, I 64, 79–85, 179, 197–212, 214, 314 ff.; II 71 ff, 248 f.; structure and jurisdiction, I 86 f., 115, 212–236, 260 f, 283, 314 ff, 428, 430 f.; II 21–24, 31, 37, 41–46, 49–52, 54, 65–70, 77, 127–130, 168, 262–270, 432, 463, 514; *see also* Autonomy of Jewish community; Criminal jurisdiction of Jewish community; Unions of Jewish community councils
- Jewish quarters, I 49 f, 53, 56 f, 79 ff, 112, 114, 141–144, 193 f, 197 f, 205, 247, 311 f, 364 f, 388, 394, 404, 421, 427; II 15, 35 f, 55, 66, 71, 97 f., 106 f, 119, 123 f, 229, 342, 367 f, 380, 434, 467, 484; Christians within, I 114; II 123, 247
- Joachim of Fiore, I 270 f, 274, 438
- Joel ibn Sho'eb, II 507
- Johanan ibn Daud (Joannes Aven-deuth Hispanus), I 52, 66, 387
- Johannes Ferrandi, II 461
- John I of Aragon, II 32, 38 f., 41, 43 f., 50, 52, 56, 59 f., 69, 71, 84, 89 f., 92 ff, 100 f., 103–117 *passim*, 119f., 125, 142, 155, 163, 463 f, 466 f., 473
- John I of Castile, I 375–378, 451; II 96, 473
- John II of Aragon, II 246, 276, 304, 370, 383
- John II of Castile, II 166 f., 244, 250, 259, 275 f., 281 f., 487
- John II of Portugal, II 318
- John XXII, pope, II 15
- Jonah b. Abraham Gerondi, I 102, 250–253, 256, 258, 320, 401 f, 436
- Jonah Desmaestre (Biona del Maestre), II 53 f, 70, 91, 464, 469
- Jonah Gerondi, cousin of the above, I 169
- Joseph b. Abraham Isaac Halevi, II 106, 156, 474
- Joseph Abravanel, II 318, 433, 437
- Joseph Albo, I 447; II 173, 178, 185, 197, 210, 217 f, 226 ff, 230, 232 ff., 479 f., 483 f.
- Joseph Alcastiel, II 426, 429 f, 496 f., 508
- Joseph ibn Alfakhar, I 95, 390
- Joseph Almeredi, I 140, 223
- Joseph ibn Ardut, II 28
- Joseph de Avila, I 198, 403, 422
- Joseph ibn Baruch, I 428
- Joseph Bienveniste, II 270
- Joseph Çamanon, I 404, 445
- Joseph Cavalier of Barcelona, I 54
- Joseph Chicatilla, II 276
- Joseph b. David, II 61
- Joseph Eleazar, II 468
- Joseph ibn Ezra, I 60
- Joseph Ferrizuel (Cidellus), I 50 f., 68, 77, 95, 387, 392
- Joseph Gatenyo, II 472
- Joseph Gikatilia, I 192, 244, 420, 433
- Joseph Halevi b. Ephraim aben Shabat: *see* Yuçaf de Ecija
- Joseph Joshua, II 248
- Joseph ibn Kamaniel, I 389 f.
- Joseph Kapah, I 429; II 452
- Joseph Karo, I 442
- Joseph Kimchi, II 252
- Joseph ibn Megas, I 389
- Joseph b. Moses ibn Baruch, I 82, 224
- Joseph aben Nahmias, I 446
- Joseph Nassi, II 259
- Joseph Orabuena, II 72, 118, 139, 143
- Joseph Picho, I 366 f., 376, 450
- Joseph Ravaya, I 164, 166, 169–172, 224, 409 f, 412, 428
- Joseph Sabbatai (Yuçaf Çabaçay), I 113

- Joseph b. Samuel ha-Nagid, I 35 f., 383
 Joseph ibn Shaprut, I 394, 407
 Joseph ibn Shemtob, II 250, 270, 283, 484 f., 487
 Joseph b. Shem Tob Falaquera, I 220 f., 425
 Joseph (Abu Omar) ibn Shoshan, I 92, 397
 Joseph b. Todros Halevi, I 445
 Joseph b. Todros Halevi Abulafia, I 108 f., 391, 400 f.
 Joseph ibn Wakar, I 367, 450
 Joseph Ya'abetz, II 162, 426, 443, 477, 486, 509 f.
 Joseph ibn Zabara, I 95
 Joseph ibn Zaddik, I 450
 Joshua Halorki, II 139–150, 171, 173, 370, 473 f., 476; *see also* Hieronymus de Sancta Fide
 Juan, bishop of Burgos, I 122
 Juan Arias de Avila, II 283
 Juan de Baena: *see* Juan de Pineda
 Juan de Ciudad, II 297 f, 384 ff.
 Juan Franco, II 410–421 *passim*, 505 f.
 Juan Garcez de Marcilla, II 365
 Juan Llotger, II 11
 Juan López de Cigales, II 402
 Juan de Lucena, II 345 f., 495
 Juan de Madrid, II 347
 Juan Manuel, infante, I 121 f., 136 f., 182, 192, 323, 402, 404, 416, 420; II 4
 Juan de Ocaña, II 399, 412, 416 f., 505
 Juan Pacheco, II 306–309, 348
 Juan Panpan, II 335
 Juan Pardo, II 293
 Juan de Pero Sanchez, II 370, 498
 Juan de Pineda, II 347 ff., 489
 Juan Poeta de Valladolid, II 301 f., 490
 Juan Sánchez de Calatayud, II 93, 474
 Juan Sánchez Exarch, II 366 f.
 Juan Sánchez de Sevilla, II 354 ff., 474, 496
 Juan de la Sierra, II 494
 Juan de Solivera (Çolivera), II 364 ff., 368
 Juan de St. Jordi, II 383 f.
 Juan de Talavera, II 341 f.
 Juan *el viejo* of Toledo, II 159 f., 476
 Juana Desfar, II 359, 363
 Jucef Abenpesat, I 388
 Jucef Alcumiel, I 388
 Jucef Faquim (Joseph Haquim), II 47, 52
 Jucef ben Jesua, II 485
 Jucef aben Vives, I 407
 Juceph Abraham, II 470
 Judah Abravanel, I 136, 309; II 437, 440, 510
 Judah Adret, II 272
 Judah b. Asher b. Yehiel, I 316, 374, 424, 428, 432; II 140, 453
 Judah, grandson of Asher b. Yehiel, II 97, 139, 465
 Judah b. Astrug Bonseniyor, II 6, 460
 Judah b. Barzilai al-Barceloni, I 41, 59
 Judah de la Cavalleria, 1144 f., 158, 161, 163, 174, 215, 222 f., 282, 400, 405 ff.; II 30
 Judah Crescas Perfet, II 39
 Judah Cresques, II 52, 103, 464, 469
 Judah Eleazar, II 26, 30, 54 f.
 Judah ibn Ezra, I 60, 77, 95
 Judah aben Hacen (aben Facen), I 411
 Judah Halevi, I 59, 62, 64, 67–76, 85, 107, 123 f., 176, 184, 187, 245, 386 f., 389–392; II 158, 486
 Judah al-Harizi, I 95
 Judah ibn Hasdai, I 401
 Judah he-Hasid, I 98, 244, 317
 Judah b. Isaac ibn Sabbatai, I 94 f., 398
 Judah b. Isaac ibn Wakar, I 322 ff.
 Judah b. Jacob Hayyat, II 426, 508
 Judah b. Joseph Alfakhar, I 107, 109, 400
 Judah ibn Manasseh, I 165
 Judah Mosca: *see* Judah b. Moses ha-Kohen
 Judah Mosconi, II 48, 468
 Judah b. Moses ha-Kohen, I 120
 Judah Solomon, I 228, 418, 429, 439 f.
 Judah ibn Tibbon, I 54
 Judah ibn Verga, II 317, 325, 492

- Judah aben Vives, I 412
 Judah b. Yakar, I 399
Juderia: see Jewish quarter
 Judges, I 212–216 *passim*, 316, 444;
 II 23 f., 58, 84 f., 262 f.; see also
Berurim; *Rab de la Corte*
 Julian, bishop of Toledo, I 21
 Junez Trigo, II 57, 63, 464
 Juridical relations, between Jews
 and Christians, I 41 f., 44 f., 51,
 53, 56, 83, 86 ff., 101, 115, 131,
 173, 180, 310; II 66; between
 Jews and Moslems, I 52, 56, 86;
 II 432
Kad ha-Kemah, I 229 f., 417, 429,
 433
Kahal, I 212–236 *passim*, 283, 314,
 415, 421, 429 ff.; see also Jewish
 community, structure and juris-
 diction
 Kalonymos b. Kalonymos, I 427,
 443; II 11, 19 ff.
 Karaites, I 26, 51, 65, 77, 95, 104,
 151, 350, 390; II 456
Kelimath ha-Goyim, II 151, 154,
 467
 Kimhi, David: see David Kamhi
Kusari, I 73 ff., 184, 391 ff.; II 158
 La Guardia trial, II 380, 398–423,
 492, 502–506
 Land ownership, 117 f., 20, 40, 43 f.,
 56, 114, 135 f., 141, 175, 197, 200
 f., 209, 251, 313, 361, 383 ff., 423,
 426; II 30 f., 49, 57, 168 f., 247
 Languedoc, I 98–101, 128, 289
 Lateran Council, Fourth, I 101, 116
 Law, Canon, I 109, 113, 115, 172,
 233; II 13, 69, 286, 331, 447 f.;
 Castilian, I 115 ff.; II 445 ff.; see
 also *Fueros*; general, relation-
 ship of Jews to, I 27, 81 ff., 286
 f., 315, 441 f.; n 51, 82, 388 f.; see
 also Criminal jurisdiction of
 Jewish community; Roman, I 9
 f., 18 f., 115, 161, 233, 283, 315;
 II 65 f., 69, 73, 81, 445, 447 f.
 Legislation, anti-Jewish, I 18–22
passim, 44 f., 101, 116, 135 f.,
 144, 147 f., 173, 310, 375 f.; of
 1412, II 166–169, 229, 241, 249,
 323, 325; see also Cortes; Ex-
 pulsion, Edict of
 Leo Grech : see Judah Mosconi
 Leon, I 29, 31, 44, 46, 51, 80, 89 f.,
 129, 191, 214, 386, 396; II 167,
 394, 397
 Leonor de Guzman, I 326, 358
 Lerida, I 57 f., 82, 105, 140, 146,
 194, 216, 421; II 11 f., 15, 25, 91,
 108, 115, 124, 384, 461, 472, 499
 Levi b. Abraham b. Hayyim, I 292,
 294
 Levi b. Shemtob, II 372 ff., 498 f.
 Libels against Jews, I 22, 173,
 357, 375; II 16, 28, 38 f., 88–92,
 362 f., 379 f.; see also Blood libel
Livnath ha-Sapir, II 14, 461
Livyat Hen, I 292 Llerena, II 317
 Lope Franco, II 401
 Lope de Gurrea, II 112
 Lope de Haro, I 132 f.
 Louis IX of France, I 149, 324,
 328
 Lucena, I 24, 60, 65
 Lucena family, II 345 ff.
 Luis de Guzman, II 252 f.
 Luis de Puertocarrero, II 308
 Luis Sánchez, II 375
 Luis de Santangel, II 321, 328,
 370, 492, 494, 498
Lumen ad revelationem gentium
 (Light of the Gentiles), II 291
Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut, II 426
Ma'aseh Ephod, II 106, 113, 151 f.,
 475
 Machiavelli, II 441, 513
 Maçot Avengena, II 38, 470
 Madrid, I 358; II 97, 289 f., 351
 Madrigal, II 323
 Magallon, II 371
Magen va-Romach, II 253, 486 f.
Maggid Mùhneh, II 38
 Magic, II 7, 87, 317, 342, 464, 476,
 503; see also La Guardia trial
 Magona, I 17
 “Maiden of Herrera,” II 356 f., 496
 Maimonides, I 66, 77, 155, 184, 232,
 240, 245, 249, 288, 301 ff., 331,
 334, 339, 343, 349, 399, 417, 435;
 II 38, 73, 91, 94, 142, 149, 151,
 160, 162, 186, 194 f., 208, 210,

- 227 f., 235, 252, 383, 387, 391, 449 ff., 467, 486, 514
- Maimunist controversy, I 96–110, 169, 220 ff., 289, 401
- Majorca, I 17, 138 f., 141 f., 170, 195 f., 210, 231, 404, 410, 412, 416, 422, 426 f., 448; II 8, 10, 18, 26, 28, 30, 46–54, 70, 74 f., 86, 92, 102, 103, 109, 121, 159, 169, 245, 462 ff., 469, 471 f., 497
- Makhir b. Sheshet, I 95, 398
- Málaga, I 31 f.; II 317, 426, 432, 511
- Mamelukes, I 210
- Manresa, I 210, 422
- Manuel ben Aljoar, II 371
- Maria, queen of Aragon, II 99, 124, 126–130, 476
- Maria, queen of Castile, I 199
- Maria de Molina, mother of Ferdinand IV, I 308, 317
- Maritime commerce, I 18, 57, 209 f., 427, 443; II 30, 36, 47 f., 462
- Marrano*, II 270; *see Conversos*
- Marseilles, I 139; II 37
- Marsilius de Padua, II 151
- Martin I of Aragon, II 59, 94, 99 ff., 104, 121, 124, 126, 166
- Martin V, pope, II 245
- Martin de Lucena, II 345, 495
- Massacres of 1391, I 95, 312, 354, 377 f.; II 6, 46, 59, 71, 74, 76, 84 f., 94, 96–119, 134 f., 156, 160, 167, 218, 318, 453, 465, 474, 477, 507
- Mattityahu Hayitzhari, II 173, 177, 197 f., 217, 228, 478, 480
- Matut family, II 72; *see also* Samuel Matut
- Medellin, II 337
- Medina del Campo, 1191; II 185 f., 355, 488, 497
- Medina Sidonia, duke of, II 309 f., 317, 323
- Medinaceli, I 192, 200
- Megilat ha-Megalleh*, I 54, 59, 66, 392
- Meir aben Alfacar, II 267
- Meir Alguadex, I 377, 451; II 72, 118, 135, 139 f., 267, 472, 488
- Meir Araye: *see* Saul Saba
- Meir aben Eleazer, I 411
- Meir b. Gabbai, II 427–430, 477, 508
- Meir Melamed, II 316, 433, 436, 491, 510
- Meir of Rothenburg, I 317
- Meir ibn Shoshan, I, 123
- Meir b. Todros Halevi Abulafia, I 100, 106–109, 397 f., 400
- Menahem ha-Aruk, II 79
- Menahem b. Saruk, I 29, 383
- Menahem b. Zerah, I 373, 378, 419, 450 f.
- Mendicant friars, I 98, 150 f.; II 86, 332 *Menorath ha-Maor*, I 374, 451; II 391
- Mercatello, I 43
- Merchants, Jewish, I 32 f., 43 ff., 48, 79, 89, 179, 197 f., 202, 204 f., 228, 244, 304, 312, 361, 427; II 21, 25 f., 29 f., 36, 49, 105, 107, 168, 247
- Meshal ha-Kadmoni*, I 92, 200, 397, 436 f.
- Meshullam b. Solomon da Piera, I 102
- Messianic beliefs, I 9 f., 13, 21 f., 27, 54, 59, 65 f., 71 f., 78, 96 f., 153, 184, 247–250, 269, 273, 276–281, 289, 335 f., 350 f., 433; II 20 f., 135, 145 f., 149, 159–162, 174–210, 292–295, 308, 320, 350 ff., 356 ff., 360, 392, 424 ff., 428 ff., 442, 476, 480, 483, 488, 496, 500 f.
- Migdal 'Oz*, I 330
- Milhemeth Mitzvah*, II 228
- Military activities, of Jews, I 59 f., 89, 113 f., 175, 186, 204, 359, 368, 389, 397; II 370
- Minhath Kena'oth*, of Abba Mari of Lunel, I 290, 398, 442 f.
- Minhath Kena'oth*, of Abner of Burgos, I 330, 337–347, 446; II 477
- Minorca, I 17, 174, 381, 404
- Miranda, I 423
- Mishneh Torah*, I 349; II 38, 73, 91, 186, 227, 387, 391, 449, 467, 514
- Missionary activities, towards Jews, 1155 f., 159, 167 f.; II 108, 477 f.; *see also* Vincent Ferrer
- Moneylending, I 28, 40, 84 f., 89, 117 f., 149, 201, 204, 312, 386; II 17, 48, 249, 463, 466; legislation

- concerning, I 116 ff., 135 f., 147–150, 160, 207 f., 360 ff.; II 3 f., 85, 168; opposition to, I 309 f., 371; II 4
- Montalvan, II 345 f., 349, 355
- Montblanch, I 216, 282, 440; II 11, 99, 461
- Montclus, I 42; II 15
- Montearagon, I 82, 405
- Montesa, I 164 f.; Order of Knights of, II 106
- Montiel, I 367
- Montpellier, I 101 ff., 109, 142, 144, 159, 289, 293, 295 ff., 401 f., 435; II 8
- Monzon, I 105, 150, 408; II 15, 25, 131, 466
- Moral laxity, I 238 f., 241 f., 261 f.; II 19 f., 117, 240 ff.; *see also* Domestic relations
- More Nebukhim: see the Guide for the Perplexed*
- Moreh Zedek*, I 330, 333 f., 446; II 172
- Morocco, I 355 f., 358, 410; II 5, 16, 47
- Moses Abenarnas, II 401, 412 f., 503
- Moses abn Abez, II 63, 134 f., 173, 181 f., 218, 465, 478
- Moses Abzaradiel, I 327, 356, 358 f., 445
- Moses b. Alazar, II 57, 464
- Moses Alconstantini, I 163, 172, 223 f., 409, 411
- Moses Almosnino, II 297, 385
- Moses Arovas, II 337
- Moses Arragel, II 251 ff., 486
- Moses Arrondi, II 297 f., 385
- Moses of Burgos, II 160
- Moses Çarça, I 422
- Moses of Coucy, I 373
- Moses al Dar‘i, I 65
- Moses ibn Ezra, I 59 ff., 64, 83 f., 90, 124, 214, 388 ff., 392
- Moses Faquim (Hakim), II 50, 52 f., 464
- Moses Franco, II 410–421 *passim*, 503
- Moses Gabbai, II 121, 472
- Moses Haninai Adret, II 375
- Moses Hanoch, II 41, 470
- Moses b. Isaac Halevi (Escapat-Malet), I 443
- Moses b. Isaac de Tolosa, I 439
- Moses de Leon, I 198 f., 244, 261, 390, 403, 422, 433
- Moses b. Maimon (RaMBaM): *see* Maimonides
- Moses b. Na(c)hman (RaMBaN): *see* Na(c)hmanides
- Moses Narboni, I 332, 373, 446, 449
- Moses Nathan, II 25, 37, 461
- Moses ha-Parnas, I 84
- Moses Ravaya, I 164, 169, 171 f., 413
- Moses (Hacohen) of Tordesillas, I 374 f.
- Moses ibn Turiel, I 136
- Moslem influences, on Jewish life, I 177, 188, 195, 197, 200, 212, 236 f.
- Moslem Spain, Jews in, I 22–38, 186 ff., 197
- Motadhid, *cadi* of Seville, I 34
- Muça de Portella, I 163, 165 f., 174, 216, 229, 239, 283, 410, 414, 440
- Mukademin (adelantados)*, I 118, 212, 214, 218–224 *passim*, 227, 231, 430; II 3, 62 f., 71, 78, 81 f., 127–130; *see also* Jewish community, structure and jurisdiction
- Murcia, I 111, 114 f., 132, 136, 139, 145, 158, 196, 309, 405, 411; II 4, 316, 397, 413
- Murviedro, I 165, 195, 208, 219, 405, 407, 422, 426; II 76, 102, 245, 465
- Mutual aid societies, I 205; II 44, 56
- Mysticism, I 99, 243–306 *passim*, 330 f., 347, 373; II 6, 73, 427–431; *see also* Cabalism; Na(c)hmanides
- Na(c)hmanides, I 102–106, 120, 143 f., 152–157, 159, 215, 239, 245–249, 257, 281 f., 286, 288 f., 305, 399, 408, 433, 436, 441 f.; II 142, 174, 179, 185, 195, 210, 252, 476, 489
- Najera, I 43, 53, 366
- Nasi*, I 54, 92, 94 f., 105 f., 143, 304, 398, 406, 443
- Nathan Falaquera, I 425
- Natiar family, II 50

- National consciousness, Jewish, I 6 f., 37, 69, 188 f.; II 156 ff., 425
- Natronai, Gaon of Sura, I 23 f.
- Navarre, I 29, 31, 42, 46, 62, 79, 83, 103, 148, 174 ff., 187, 193, 200, 203 f., 215, 217, 234, 384, 388, 393, 395, 425, 450; II 8, 15, 17, 21, 29, 118 f., 126, 461, 471, 510 f.
- Neëmanim*, I 217, 219 f., 282, 304, 443; II 22 ff., 41, 45, 49, 54, 68, 71, 262, 466; *see also* *Mukademin*
- Neve Shalom*, II 246
- Nicholas III, pope, I 167 f.
- Nicholas V, pope, II 282, 489
- Nicholas Donin, I 150 f., 350; II 205, 224, 394
- Nicolaus Eymerich, II 86, 467, 503
- Nissim b. Reuben Gerondi, II 26, 37–40, 60 f., 105, 461 f.
- Oath, Jewish, I 88, 117, 147 f., 172 f., 258, 310; II 388
- Ocaña, II 260, 317, 374 f., 405
- Occupations, Jewish, I 41, 197 f., 201 ff., 424–427; II 36 f., 55 f., 168, 247; *see also* Economic structure of Jewish community; individual occupational listings
- 'Olat Shabbath*, II 464
- Or Adonai, II 162 ff., 232, 477
- Or ha-Hayyim*, II 426, 443, 477, 509
- Orhot ha-Hayyim*, II 51
- Orihuela, I 114
- Orovida de la Cavalleria, II 58
- Osma, II 99
- Pablo Christiani, I 152, 155–159
- Palamos, I 164
- Palencia, I 192, 321, 366, 420, 445; II 161 f., 285, 356, 397
- Palestine, 111 f., 35 f., 46 f., 57, 66 f., 78, 154, 159, 248; II 36, 52, 103, 151, 348, 367, 426 f., 430; emigration to, II 158–162, 292–299 *passim*, 310, 338, 441, 475
- Palma, II 308
- Panpana, La (María González), II 335 f.
- Pamplona, I 29, 193, 203, 395, 420, 425; II 15, 17, 29, 75
- Paredes, I 321
- Paulus de Sancta Maria, II 141–151, 154 f., 166, 171, 284, 471, 473 f.; *see also* Solomon Halevi of Burgos
- Pedro I of Castile (the Cruel), I 362, 364, 366 f., 450; II 29
- Pedro II of Aragon, I 91, 93, 138, 394, 398
- Pedro III of Aragon, I 141, 147, 162–177, 195, 206, 210, 215, 223 ff., 284, 323 f., 358, 407, 409–412, 414 ff., 427 f., 439 f.; II 7, 17, 30, 172
- Pedro IV of Aragon, I 376; II 6, 14, 18, 24 f., 28–34, 41 f., 46, 49–52, 54, 57, 59, 64 f., 68, 71, 88–92, 462 f.
- Pedro Alfonso de Cordova, II 293 f., 309
- Pedro de Arbues, II 367–371, 376, 379, 499
- Pedro Arias de Avila, II 283
- Pedro de la Cavalleria, II 276 f., 305, 372, 490 f.
- Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza, II 300
- Pedro de Luna, II 141, 155, 171, 245; *see also* Benedict XIII, anti-pope
- Pedro Sarmiento, II 279–282
- Pedro Serrano of Montalvan, II 349 f.
- Pedro de Villada, II 399, 402–421 *passim*
- Peñafiel, I 192, 403
- Peres, rabbi and physician of Toledo, II 409
- Perez ha-Cohen, II 37, 40
- Perfet (Sheshet) family, I 17, 91, 227, 397; *see also* Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet; Judah Crescas Perfet
- Perfet Saltell, I 443
- Perpignan, I 119, 142, 146, 159, 162, 194, 287, 289, 292, 421; II 15, 18, 25, 44, 86, 90, 100, 108 f., 150, 447, 463
- Pesquisa*, II 445 f., 453
- Peter Abelard, I 185; II 208
- Peter de Janua, I 152, 156
- Petrus Alfonsi (Moshe ha-Sefardi), I 59
- Pharisees, I 7–15
- Philip IV of France, II 8

- Philosophy, ban on study of, I 290–305, 442 f.; II 235 f., 489; conflict with religion, I 96–110, 240 ff, 244 f., 288–305 *passim*, 399, 433, 465; II 162–166, 232–239, 253–259; *see also* Maimonist controversy; Jewish: *see* Averroism, Cabalism, Disputations, Judah Halevi, Maimonides, Mysticism, Na(c)hmanides, Polemics; of Abraham Bivach, II 296 f.; of apostasy, I 330–335, 446 f.; II 239; of Hasdai Crescas, II 162–166; of Judah Halevi, I 73–76; rationalist, I 3, 25, 37, 74 f., 153 f., 249 f., 258, 335–343 *passim*, 347, 350, 372 f., 401 f.; *see also* Averroism, Maimonides
- Phineas ben Yair, I 8
- Physicians, I 28 f., 50, 55, 121, 136, 144, 180, 182 f., 202, 204, 228, 241, 280, 304, 311 f., 328, 351, 359 f., 365, 377, 410, 443, 448; II 4 ff., 8 f., 18, 24, 29, 37, 44, 48 f., 54, 57, 72, 105, 118, 139, 150, 168, 218, 246 f., 249 f., 275, 297, 321 f., 386, 391, 411, 461–464, 469 f., 492
- Pico della Mirandola, II 440
- Pietism, I 28, 98, 244, 248, 250, 254, 257, 266, 270–277, 288, 305, 316 f., 444; II 18, 137
- Pisa, I 210
- Pius II, pope, II 347
- Plasencia, II 318 f., 485
- Poetry, poets, *converso*, II 211–224 *passim*, 275, 301 f., 310 f., 321, 347, 472, 483, 490; *see also* Solomon b. Meshullam de Piera; Hebrew, I 31 f., 37 f., 47, 60–64, 67–73, 94, 123 f., 134 f., 137, 237–240, 383 f., 357, 389 f., 397, 422, 445; II 25, 58, 63, 72, 106, 118, 121 f., 134–138, 173, 211–224, 437, 472
- Poland, II 269
- Polemics, anti-Jewish, I 21, 59, 183 ff., 373, 392; II 86, 139–150, 283–292, 390–398, 467, 479, 484, 487; *see also* Apostates, ideology of; Disputations; Jewish, I 335 f., 351, 357 f.; n 84, 139–156, 163, 218–223; *see also* Averroism, Disputations de Ponte, B, governor general of Aragon, II 89
- Population statistics, I 41, 47, 140, 189–196, 201 f., 418–422; II 9, 31, 35, 46, 120, 230, 245 ff, 381, 432, 438, 462, 485, 500, 510 f.; of English Jews, I 190
- Portella family, II 5; *see also* Ishmael, Muça de Portella
- Portugal, I 43, 186, 309, 353, 377, 425; II 121, 317 ff., 326, 352, 426, 435, 437 f., 497, 499, 510 f.
- Privileges, basis of Castilian law, I 115; to artisans, II 56; to Jewish communities, I 41, 43, 56, 87, 115, 140–143, 159 ff, 163, 171, 206, 210 f., 232, 387, 447; II 2, 27 f., 33, 48, 65–70, 81, 91, 121, 447, 450–453, 465; to Jewish court officials, I 92, 224, 407, 410, 414; II 58; to Jews, I 117, 171, 309; II 4, 9, 21, 266 f., 485
- Profet Duran the Ephodi, II 106, 113, 150–158, 173, 217 f., 467, 470 f., 474 f.
- Proselytes to Judaism, I 11, 13, 20, 24, 159, 181 f., 416 f.; II 10 f., 48
- Provençal de Piera, II 38
- Proverbios Morales*, I 358
- Puerto de Santa María, II 494
- Pugio Fidei*, I 167, 185, 331, 434; II 172, 181, 467
- Ra'aya Mehemna*, I 244, 270–277, 369, 371 f., 428, 438 f.
- Rab de la Corte*, I 119, 174, 212, 215 f., 315, 377, 444; II 436; jurisdiction of, I 119 f., 213, 315; II 259–270 *passim*, 491; *see also* Abraham Bienveniste
- Rabbis, criticism of, II 76 ff, 241, 248
- Ramon Berenguer III, I 53 f.
- Ramon Berenguer IV, I 54–57, 92, 388, 395
- Ramón Lull (Raymond Lully), I 183 ff, 417 f.; II 6, 208
- Ramon de Tarrega, II 87
- Ransom of captives, I 54, 391; II 47, 317, 432, 463
- Ravaya family, I 166, 283, 440; *see*

- also* Astrug, Joseph, Moses Ravaya
- Raymond Martini, I 152, 154, 156, 167, 185, 281, 331, 334, 376, 411 f., 434; II 142, 171 f., 178, 180 f., 183, 188, 195, 205, 284, 479, 483
- Raymond de Peñaforte, I 152, 156 f., 161
- "Refutation of the Blasphemer" (*Teshuboth la-Meharef*), I 336, 348
- Religion, laxity in observance, I 28, 236, 240, 250; *see also* Averroism; reforms in, I 189, 243–305; II 53 f., 60–64, 73–85, 232–243, 259–270; *see also* Maimunist controversy; Philosophy, conflict with religion
- Responsa literature, I 201, 239, 281 f., 383, 407, 424 f., 439 f.; II 61, 74–84, 426, 450–453, 461–472 *passim*, 496 f., 508; *see also* Asher b. Yehiel; Isaac b. Sheshet Perfet; Judah b. Asher; Nissim b. Reuben Gerondi; Simon b. Zemach Duran; Solomon b. Abraham ibn Adret; re. converts to Judaism, I 417; II 10; re. court officials, I 441; re. domestic relations, I 254–257, 318–321, 435–436; II 133; re. informers, I 234 f., 285 f.; re. "prophet of Avila," I 278 ff.; re. *conversos*, I 408 f.; II 133, 497, 507; re. slave ownership, I 415; re. study of philosophy, I 291–304
- Robert of Naples, II 32
- Rocaberti, viscount of, II 107
- Rodrigo Cifuentes, II 292
- Rodrigo Cota, II 300, 311
- Rodrigo de Orense, II 338, 495
- Roussillon, II 8, 28, 100, 511
- Rueda, I 426
- Ruesta, I 42
- Sahagun, I 192, 214, 420; II 446
- Salamanca, I 448; II 79, 322, 337, 418, 466
- Salonica, II 297, 385, 511
- Salvation, doctrine of, I 13 f., 350 f.; II 154, 190 f.
- Samson b. Meir, I 299 f.
- Samuel b. Abraham, I 401
- Samuel f. Abraham Abinnaxim: *see* Samuel Alfaquim
- Samuel Abravanel, I 366, 378, 450 f.; II 93, 468; *see also* Juan Sánchez de Sevilla
- Samuel Abulafia of Molina, I 450
- Samuel Adret, II 272
- Samuel Alfaquim, I 165, 410, 412
- Samuel Avengalel, I 410
- Samuel Benveniste of Barcelona, II 94 f., 398
- Samuel Benveniste of Majorca, I 139, 404
- Samuel Benveniste of Soria, II 63, 99, 470
- Samuel Çarça, I 373, 449
- Samuel, rabbi of Cuellar, II 251
- Samuel Halevi of Toledo, I 362 ff., 368, 448
- Samuel Hasdai Halevi, II 272
- Samuel b. Isaac ha-Sardi, I 441
- Samuel b. Joseph Abbassi, I 221
- Samuel b. Joseph ibn Sason, I 357, 445
- Samuel Matut, I 373, 377, 451; II 76, 465
- Samuel ha-Nagid, I 32–35, 54, 281, 383
- Samuel Parenti, II 299
- Samuel ibn Tibbon, I 54
- Samuel Valenci, II 342 f.
- Samuel de Valladolid, I 403
- Samuel ibn Wakar, I 327, 354 ff.
- Samuel b. Xuxen, II 259
- San Martin, I 426
- San Mateo, II 225–229
- Sanahuja, II 36
- Sancha, queen of Aragon, I 82, 91
- Sancho I (the Fat) of Leon and Navarre, I 29
- Sancho III, *el Mayor*, of Navarre, I 384 f.
- Sancho IV of Castile, I 128–137, 182, 198, 244, 277 f., 403 f., 410, 438
- Sancho VI of Navarre, I 388, 393 f.
- Sancho Ramirez of Aragon, I 42 f.
- Sancta Maria family, II 274, 309; *see also* Paulus de Sancta Maria
- Santa Coloma de Queralt, I 210, 422, 431; II 132, 272

- Santa Cruz monastery, II 331, 340, 371, 381, 391, 398, 407, 418
- Santiago de Compostela, I 191; II 407 f., 412, 504
- Santiago, Order of, I 123; II 306, 347 f.
- Santo Tomás monastery, II 401
- Santob de Carrion: *see* Shem Tob Arduziel
- Saragossa, I 24, 31, 46, 64, 66, 90 f., 94, 105, 138, 144 ff., 149, 163, 165, 239, 390, 411, 426, 430; II 5 ff., 79, 89 f., 92, 99, 101, 103, 135, 138, 170, 173, 196, 198, 212, 214, 276, 365, 383, 473; expulsion from, II 372, 374, 381, 389; Inquisition in, II 13 f., 363 f., 367–381, 389, 435; Jewish community, I 92, 140, 176, 193, 205, 222–225, 227, 229, 388, 397–400 *passim*, 405, 420, 425, 428, 432, 439, 444; II 3, 10, 13 f., 20 f., 25, 40, 43, 55–64, 70, 72, 74, 76 f., 82, 84, 126 f., 140, 159, 229, 245, 248 f., 271, 273, 464 ff., 472, 485, 499, 507, 509; Jewish quarter, I 53, 193, 388; II 55, 368, 380
- Sardinia, II 47, 90
- Saul Saba (Meir Araye), II 342
- Scholars, Jewish, I 120, 197 f., 228, 240 f., 304, 367, 421, 443; II 2 f., 6, 18 f., 32, 37, 48, 52 ff., 72, 74 ff., 85, 92, 98, 105, 107, 133 f., 139 f., 252 f., 318, 352, 426, 461, 467; *see also* Disputations
- Scholem, Gershom G., I 244, 399, 403, 420, 422, 433, 436 f., 446, 450 f.; II 426 f., 430, 485, 495 f., 500 f., 508, 510
- Sefer ha-Emunoth*, II 234–239, 484
- Sefer ha-Ge'ula*, I 248
- Sefer Hasidim*, I 266, 427, 431, 434; II 19
- Sefer ha-'Ikkarim*, I 447; II 173, 178, 210, 232 ff., 483 f.
- Sefer ha-Kanah*, I 369–373, 450 f.
- Sefer ha-Peliah*, I 369, 372 f., 450 f.
- Sefer ha-Shetarot*, I 41
- Sefer ha-Shorashim*, II 13
- Sefer Yezirah*, I 59
- Sefer ha-Yir'a*, I 250, 434
- Segovia, I 191 f., 198, 244, 365, 420, 422; II 97 f., 283, 285, 288, 305, 308 f., 327, 331, 340 ff., 348, 391, 398–401
- Segregation of Jews, I 114, 116, 310; II 9, 95, 125, 167 ff., 229, 249, 302, 325, 330, 351, 433, 477
- Servants, Christian, II 266
- Severus, bishop of Majorca, I 17, 381
- Seville, I 22, 30 f., 34, 50, 111–114, 119, 124, 130, 191, 197, 307, 309, 311 ff., 321, 324, 326, 359, 362, 364, 369, 378, 402, 417, 419, 448; II 47, 94–97, 99, 104, 117, 246, 307–310, 317 f., 323, 354, 381, 485; Inquisition in, n 317, 324–328, 333, 345, 352, 493
- Sha'arei Teshuba*, I 250, 256, 258, 434 436
- Shealtiel Bonafos, II 218 ff.
- Shebet Yehuda*, I 355, 358 f., 396, 445; n 177, 179, 251, 317, 325, 345, 441, 479, 486 f., 492, 495
- Shemaya, rabbi and physician, II 270, 301, 487, 490
- Shem Tob Arduziel, I 358, 447
- Shem Tob Falaquera, I 203, 220 f., 433
- Shemtob b. Isaac Shaprut, II 172, 470
- Shemtob ibn Shemtob, II 234–239, 426, 484
- Shem Tov Falcon, II 51
- Shepherds, II 9, 15 f., 20
- Sheshet family: *see* Perfet family
- Sheshet b. Isaac Benveniste, I 91, 94 f., 100, 398
- Sheshet b. Sh'altiel, I, 443
- Sheshet b. R. Shelomo, I 54
- Shmarya of Negroponte, I, 359, 447
- Shmuel bar Nachmani, II 482
- Sicily, I 171 f., 412 f., 425, 427; II 8 f., 100, 104, 244, 311, 375
- Siete Partidas*, I 116, 416; II 452
- Sigena, I 82, 94, 394; II 124
- Siguenza, I 200
- Simancas, II 32,1
- Simeon b. Joseph, I 442
- Simon b. Zemach Duran, II 54, 159, 462 ff., 468–472 *passim*, 474 f., 495 f., 507
- Sisebut, I 19 f.
- Sixtus IV, pope, II 324, 329

- Slave ownership, Jewish, I 18, 20 f., 52, 56, 94, 141 f., 181 f., 211, 255, 259, 314, 364, 376, 395, 415 ff.; II 48, 96, 463
- Sod ha-Gemul*, I 330
- Solomon Abnarrabi, II 62 ff., 465
- Solomon b. Abraham Ardutiel, I 450
- Solomon b. Abraham ibn Adret (RaShBA), I 160 f., 214, 216 f., 218 ff., 224, 227 f., 238, 240, 253–256, 260 f., 278–305, 307, 317 f., 388, 397, 402, 406–409, 411, 413–418, 425 f., 428–432, 434 ff., 439–443; II 2 f., 9, 18, 40, 80 f., 105, 162, 252, 450 f., 478
- Solomon b. Abraham of Montpelier, I 102 f., 105 f., 109, 169, 288, 400 ff.
- Solomon Alami (ben Lahmish), II 239–242, 484
- Solomon Alconstantini, I 138 ff., 163, 215, 399 f., 404 f.
- Solomon Alfaol, I 82
- Solomon ibn Baruch, I 224, 428
- Solomon Biton, II 492
- Solomon Bonafed, I 427; II 173, 211–224, 248, 472, 484 f.
- Solomon Bonafos, I 144, 405
- Solomon de la Cavalleria, II 58 ff., 464
- Solomon Ferrizuel, I 50, 69
- Solomon ibn Gabirol, I 38
- Solomon Gratiani, I 440, 443
- Solomon Halevi of Burgos, I 377; II 76, 139–150, 465, 473 f.; *see also* Paulus de Sancta Maria
- Solomon b. Hasdai, II 63 f.
- Solomon Isaac, II 227
- Solomon ibn Jacob, II 6
- Solomon b. Meshullam de Piera, II 118, 121, 134–138, 211, 214 f., 472, 483
- Solomon Sescalaeta, II 38
- Solomon Shalom, II 272
- Solomon b. Simeon Duran, II 228, 496, 507
- Solomon ibn Verga, I 445; II 251, 259, 317, 325, 441, 479, 492
- Solomon Vidal, I 165, 442
- Solomon (Don Çulema) ibn Zadok, I 124
- Solomon Zalmati, II 497
- Solomon ha-Zarfati, II 52, 75, 463, 465
- Soria, I 192, 375, 420, 449, 451; II 63, 99, 169, 250
- Speranza Cifuentes, II, 292, 294 f.
- St. Jerome, Order of, II 289, 337 f.
- St. John, Order of, II 58 f.
- Status of Jews : *see* Vassals, Jews as
- Stewards, Jewish: *see* Bailiffs; Fiscal administrators
- Summa Theologica*, II 207
- Synagogues, I 57, 113, 116, 120, 130, 143, 160, 211; II 14, 56, 111, 245, 251, 262, 372, 376, 434, 500; converted to churches, II 11, 96 f., 101, 124, 434; destruction of, II 95, 97; of Barcelona, I 155; II 23, 119, 121, 123; of Calatayud, I 421; of Cervera, II 123; of Gerona, II 484; of Majorca, I 404; of Montblanch, II 11; of mutual aid societies, I 205; of Saragossa, II 130; of Segovia, II 285; of Seville, I 312, 326, 359 n 96 f.; of Tarragona, II 11, 122, 461; of Toledo, I 68, 362 f., 448 II 97; of Valladolid, I 366; site of missionary activities, I 155 f., 159, 168
- al-Tabben family, II 311
- Tahuel family, II 464, 468
- Takkanoth*, I 176, 208, 235 f., 285, 432; II 71, 77 f., 466; of Barcelona, I 226 f.; II 21–28, 42 f., 462; of Huesca, I 193, 206 f.; of Majorca, II 49, 51, 54; of Murviedro, I 208; of Saragossa, II 126–130; of Toledo, I 236, 318; of Tudela, I 220 f.; of 1354, II 24 ff., 30, 37, 44, 70, 87; of 1432, I 315 f., 444; II 261–270
- Talavera de la Reina, I 130, 202, 396, 424; II 247, 485
- Talmud, I 7–12 *passim*, 25–28, 99, 233, 244 f., 273, 284, 288, 304, 343 f., 348; II 78, 388; attacks upon, I 149–154, 159 f., 173, 224–229, 349 f., 373; II 13, 15, 86, 391–394, 461; role in Christian-Jewish disputations, I 150–154 *passim*,

- 343–348 *passim*; II 177–210 *passim*, 388
- Tamarite, II 112
- Tarazona, I 172, 174, 229, 410; II 470
- Tarragona, I 23, 95, 147, 158, 194, 216; II 11 ff., 94, 103, 122, 254, 359, 461, 511
- Tarrega, II 25
- Taxation, of Jewish community, I 86, 130 f., 175 f., 178 f., 214, 224, 242, 315, 357, 415, 423 f.; II 3, 31, 266–270, 485; methods of, I 206 f., 222 f., 228–231, 235, 314, 421; II 21, 47, 50, 62 f., 268 f.
- Tax farming, I 28, 127–130, 135, 145, 164, 179 f., 197 f., 201 f., 308, 312, 327, 361, 363, 366 f., 371, 445; II 4 f., 18, 29, 58 f., 63, 96, 139, 167 ff., 230, 239 ff., 249 f., 305, 315 ff., 319, 402, 433, 437, 440, 508; centralization of, II 316
- Teachers, I 207, 236, 372; II 261 f.
- Templeque, II 399, 401, 409, 415
- Templar, Order of Knights, I 57, 85, 145, 150, 210; II 16
- Teruel, I 85, 87, 440; II 16, 78, 81, 89, 112, 116, 364–368, 380, 382, 436, 453, 465 f., 498 f., 509
- Thomas Aquinas, II 143, 207, 232, 484, 489
- Thomas de Torquemada, II 282, 288 f., 292, 315, 326, 328, 331–334, 338, 340, 359, 364, 371, 381 f., 390 f., 394, 401 f., 407, 417, 422, 444, 446, 454 f., 490, 494, 503
- Tikkunei Zohar*, I 244, 270, 369, 372, 438
- Todros ibn David, II 53
- Todros Halevi of Toledo, I 95, 390, 398
- Todros b. Joseph Halevi Abulafia (*el-rab*), I 119, 127, 130, 238, 244, 257–260, 436
- Todros b. Judah Halevi, I 123 ff., 130, 133–137, 183, 213, 237–240, 308, 402 ff., 428, 432, 436 f.
- Tola'ath Ya'akov*, II 427, 508
- Toledo, I 18, 20, 22, 60, 66 f., 77, 112 f., 115, 119, 122, 124, 126, 141, 244, 250 f., 297, 299 ff., 304, 307, 309 f., 327, 357, 364 f., 387, 428, 432, 436; II 10, 16, 99, 252 f., 273, 303 f., 309, 325, 327, 381, 397, 401, 419 f., 422, 468; Civil war of 1449, II 277–282, 285 f.; Inquisition in, II 291, 338 ff., 343–358, 380, 389, 399, 416, 494 f., 499 f.; Jewish community, I 49–52, 90 ff., 94 f., 100, 106–109, 130–133, 136, 190 ff., 195 ff., 202, 214, 237–240, 311–314, 316 ff., 321, 364, 367, 389–392 *passim*, 394–397 *passim*, 400 ff., 417–420 *passim*, 422, 444, 448 ff.; II 2, 72, 97, 117 f., 246 f., 318, 485, 512; Jewish quarter, I 49 f., 79, 197, 247, 364; reforms of 1281, I 234, 257–261, 282, 284, 288; II 451; synagogues of, I 68, 120, 362 f., 448; II 97
- Tolosana, II 271
- Toro, II 323
- Torquemada: *see* Thomas de Torquemada
- Tortosa, I 46, 55 f., 146, 194, 388, 406, 416 f.; II 103, 109 f., 476, 511; disputation of, II 151, 160, 170–232, 248, 276, 322, 476, 478–483
- Tossafists*, 1102 ff., 244, 442
- Toulouse, II 8, 11, 15
- Translators, I 52, 120, 163, 165, 289, 304, 377, 387, 404, 410 f.; II 6, 18, 32, 211, 252, 317, 460, 467
- Trigo family: *see* Junez Trigo
- Trujillo, II 322, 493
- Tudela, I 46, 52 f., 56, 59, 79, 83, 193, 203, 220, 388, 391, 393 f., 398, 420, 425, 428; II 11, 15, 63, 72, 119, 465
- Uncastillo, I 142
- Unions of Jewish community councils, I 213–217, 314 f., 448; II 25, 28, 70, 313; *see also* *Takkanoth*, of 1432
- Urban VI, pope, II 475
- Urgel, count of, II 91, 212
- Urraca, queen of Castile, I 51, 391
- Usatges de Barcelona*, I 41 f.
- Valdeolivas, I 202
- Valencia, I 31, 52, 111, 139, 146,

- 208, 285, 387, 407 f., 416, 440; II 4, 115 f., 133, 159, 437 f., 477 f.; Inquisition in, II 291 f., 328 ff., 358–363, 380, 389, 402, 494, 497, 508; Jewish community, I 50, 140 ff., 163–167, 172–175, 194 ff., 210, 215, 230 f., 237, 285, 405, 410 ff., 422, 427; II 2, 25 f., 30, 54 f., 64, 74, 76, 80, 99–103, 110, 120 f., 245, 292 f., 427, 464, 468, 471, 496 f., 509
- Valladolid, I 136, 191, 326, 333, 357, 366, 385, 447 f.; II 167 ff., 261, 341 f., 397, 488, 510; statutes of 1432, I 315 f., 444; II 261–270
- Valls, II 12
- Vassals, Jews as, I 27 f., 42 f., 45, 84 ff., 89, 189, 309, 374 f., 393; II 7, 88, 99, 110 f.; *see also* Wergild; Moslems as, I 195
- Verdú, I 426
- Vich, I 210, 422; II 371, 498
- Vidal Astori, II 314
- Vidal b. Ben venist de la Cavalleria, II 174
- Vidal Benveniste de Porta, II 6
- Vidal Bienvenist (de la Cavalleria), II 317
- Vidal de Bolunya, II 460
- Vidal (Gonzalo) de la Cavalleria, II 58 f., 211–216, 224, 464, 483
- Vidal Ephraim Gerondi, II 52, 102, 463, 469
- Vidal de Piera, II, 272
- Vidal de Tolosa, II 38, 40
- Vidalon de Porta, I 169
- Vienne, Council of, I 310
- Viguera, I 393
- Villadiego, I 192, 366, 420
- Villafranca del Panades, I 156, 216, 439
- Villareal, I 165; *see also* Ciudad Real
- Vincent Ferrer, II 166–169, 170 ff., 196, 223, 230, 232, 476 ff.
- Violante, queen of Castile, II 45, 57, 60, 70, 84, 92, 94, 106, 114 f., 117, 122
- Visigoths, I 16–22, 50, 68, 382
- Vitalis ibn Aldaian, I 394
- Vivan Coffen, II 470
- Vives aben Vives, I 411
- Wailers, professional, I 313, 444
- Wergild, I 41ff., 51, 88 f., 93, 117, 233
- Yahasel Hakashlari, II 218
- Yahia b. David, of Monzon, I 57 f.
- Yehiel b. Asher, II 468
- Yehiel of Paris, I 151, 408
- Yeshivot*: *see* Academies
- aven Yohef ibn Sho'eb, II 391
- Yom Tob b. Abraham Asbili (RYTBA), I 224, 428 f.; II 452
- Yuça Tazarte, II 409–421 *passim*
- Yuçaf de Ecija, I 325 ff., 355, 359, 445
- Yuçaf aben Verga, II 118
- Yuce Franco, II 399–421 *passim*, 502–506 *passim*
- Yuce Talavera, II 341 f.
- Zamora, I 310; II 254, 342 f., 397, 401–421 *passim*, 503 f.
- Zeda la-Derekh*, I 378, 450 f.
- Zemach, grandson of Simon b.
- Zemach Duran, II 496 f., 507
- Zemerro family, I 312; II 317
- Zerahia (Ferrer Saladin) Halevi, I 397; II 135, 138, 173, 177, 179, 197 f., 207 f., 210, 217 f., 225, 228, 230, 391, 473, 476 ff., 480
- Zeror ha-Mor*, II 342
- Zikhron ha-Shemadoth*, II 151
- Zikhron Yehuda, I 428, 432, 436, 444 f.; II 453
- Zohar, I 199, 244, 246, 249, 261–270, 273, 374, 403, 417, 433, 436–439
- Zorita, I 80